

Hayden.
Grand Lodge ju-
risdictional claim.

523H.
F. Z. U.

Free Masons
DZF
HE32
Grand Lodge Jurisdictional Claim;

OR,

2881

WAR OF RACES.

AN ADDRESS

BEFORE

PRINCE HALL GRAND LODGE OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS
FOR THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS,

AT THE

FESTIVAL OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST, JUNE 24, 1868.

BY LEWIS HAYDEN, GRAND MASTER.



"Because he hath oppressed and hath forsaken the poor; because he hath violently
taken away an house which he builded not.—JOB xx. 19.

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY EDWARD S. COOMBS.

1868.

49612

~~777~~
~~75229~~

Rare
Book
H5
889
B67
H39
1868

remains.
Grand Lodge Jurisdictional Claim ;

OR,

WAR OF RACES.

AN ADDRESS

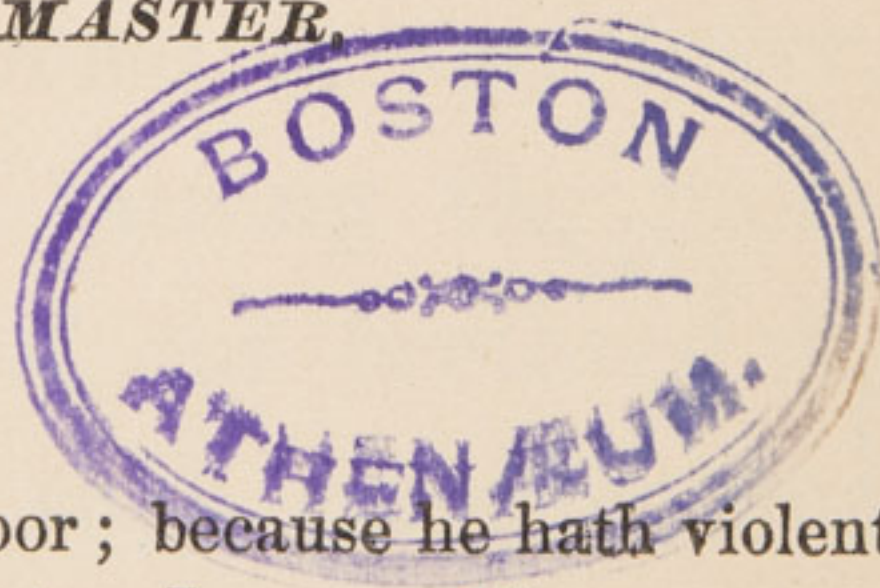
BEFORE

PRINCE HALL GRAND LODGE OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS
FOR THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS,

AT THE

FESTIVAL OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST, JUNE 24, 1868.

BY LEWIS HAYDEN, GRAND MASTER.



“ Because he hath oppressed and hath forsaken the poor ; because he hath violently
taken away an house which he builded not. —JOB xx. 19.

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY EDWARD S. COOMBS.

1868.

INTRODUCTION.

IN accordance with a vote of the Most Worshipful PRINCE HALL GRAND LODGE, we were requested to address you on this the 24th day of June, the anniversary of St. John the Baptist, on any subject which we should select touching the nature and character of our Fraternity. We have selected the JURISDICTIONAL CLAIM of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts and those of the United States, together with a prediction of a WAR OF RACES made by the Committee on Foreign Correspondence of the Grand Lodge of New York. The inequality of the contest, together with our incompetence to master the arduous task assumed, will plead in our favor, and should we succeed in even causing the more intelligent and better informed of our brethren to assume a defensive attitude, we shall consider our feeble efforts well paid for having "TROUBLED THE WATERS."

In selecting the above named subject for consideration, we were prompted by the justice of our cause, and a desire to supply our less fortunate brethren

with the historical status of the immortal founder of Freemasonry among us, and refute, to some extent, the many exaggerated articles on our "self-constitution," "irregularity," and "worthlessness." How well we have succeeded, you yourselves must judge.

In discussing the subject under notice we have religiously and masonically avoided to enter into the spirit of prejudiced retaliation, and endeavored to evince those masonic characteristics—CHARITY, BROTHERLY LOVE, and TRUTH—the clamor of our weak nature to the contrary notwithstanding. If we have, in any way, deviated from duty or justice, the enlightened hearer will no doubt attribute it to our want of knowledge in regard to masonic jurisprudence, as laid down by our opponents. Your attention is now called to the consideration of the above named subjects.

ADDRESS.

How sad the fact that all institutions in our land, whether educational, philanthropic, or religious, have been made to bow in obedience to the demands of slavery. And sadder still, to know that it will require the labor of generations yet to come to remove this blighting curse which blinds the eyes and perverts the pen of the historian of our country, so that the true history of the past has not yet been nor can be truly written, without staining every page with details of wrong done to our race. Even the masonic historian is not yet freed from its malign influence; and we are forced to admit that while the educational, philanthropic and religious associations of our country, are yielding up their old prejudices and thereby giving sway to the spirit of the age which demands equal and exact justice to all, the masonic fraternity, the most ancient and potent of all is left to exert its present injurious influence upon the young men of our land. We say potent because its teachings seldom engage the attention of the philanthropist, and by this means they are left free to mislead those who adhere to its teachings, as may be seen by the following extract from the “National Freemason” (New York), March 7, 1868:—

“LOUISIANA. — From advance sheets of the Report of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, furnished us by Brother Horner, we find the following of interest: *Negro Lodges*. — On Nov. 29th, 1784, the Grand Lodge of Eng-

land granted a Charter to Prince Hall and several other negroes in Boston, under the name of African Lodge, No. 459. This was a violation of the jurisdictional rights of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, which was organized in 1733, fifty-one years before this Charter was granted, and hence this negro Lodge was an irregular and clandestine body." The third tenet of our profession as Masons — TRUTH — is here disregarded.

Let it be borne in mind that the "jurisdictional rights" alluded to in the "Report," far from being universal, are exclusively of American origin, and absolutely peculiar to the practice of the Grand Lodges of the United States.

In no other country have these pretended "rights" been acknowledged. Never, from the morning of creation to the present moment, has such a construction of the extent and nature of the jurisdiction of Supreme Lodges been permitted or acknowledged by any Grand Masonic Body. The proof of this will be found in the following extract from a report made by David Clopton, B. B. French, and others, in the "Acacia," vol. i. p. 354: "It is recognized as a well settled principle in the masonic jurisprudence of this country, that the jurisdiction of a Grand Lodge extends with the territorial limits of the State in which it is located. The Grand Lodges of other countries do not recognize or observe this principle." This being true, there must be history to show when, and by whom, and under what circumstances, this *new* United States practice was introduced, and when approved by the Grand Lodges then in existence in the State where the same was introduced; for, until it had been received, accepted, and approved by them, it could have no binding force whatever, and the evidence of such approval is found only in their dissolution. We say in their dissolution; for such was the case, as we shall hereafter show.

It is evident, therefore, that this practice does not form an

original landmark, which would otherwise be inferred by the careless reader of the report of the Louisiana Committee. They say, "a grand Lodge was established in Massachusetts in 1733;" fifty-one years prior to the chartering and establishment of ours, which they designate as "the Negro Lodge," rendering its existence "irregular and clandestine."

We are led to believe that this statement was not made by the Committee through ignorance of masonic history, but rather by a desire to excite and foster the spirit of hatred towards the colored race. For, it is almost impossible that any body of Masons, organized as a Grand Lodge in this country, should be ignorant of the history of the organization of the Grand Lodges of Massachusetts; one of which in 1783 first inaugurated the idea of an independent Grand Lodge, and from this emanated the State *jurisdictional claim*. Thus we find in "Harris's Old Book of Constitutions" for the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, printed in 1798, paragraph 3, page 204, "that the power and authority of the said Grand Lodge be construed to extend throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and to any of the United States where none other is erected, over such Lodges only as this Grand Lodge has constituted or shall constitute."

As far as we have been able to learn of this action, we find it altogether without precedent, and therefore new. Nor was it accepted by the Masons of Massachusetts until 1792, in which year the two Grand Lodges formed a union. Until that union was formed, the two were conjointly occupying this Commonwealth with full and equal authority; as they both could not exercise exclusive jurisdiction, the claim of the one denied that of the other, which position was successfully maintained by the St. John's Grand Lodge until 1792. We find that in place of there being any rule, or claim, exercised by them, or observed by any other Grand Lodge, in

the fifty-one years alluded to by the Committee, when one day would have been sufficient to have exempted us from their rule, we were organized and working under Dispensation and Charter as a Lodge sixteen years prior to its becoming a part of the now existing Masonic Constitutions of Massachusetts; the proof of which will be found by reference to the book before mentioned, which places this statement beyond the reach of successful contradiction. Though this claim was made in 1783, we were organized and our Dispensation given in 1775, and in 1784 we were chartered; and this, while the two Grand Lodges (Massachusetts and St. John's), were existing separately; they continued thus until 1792, when they became extinct, and then came to life again in the present Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. In order to fix this fact, we would call attention to the historical dates of the two Grand Lodges by quoting the following: "To the Right Honorable and Most Worshipful Anthony, Lord Viscount Montague, Grand Master of Masons in England, an application was made by the Brethren of New England, and he was pleased in the year 5733 to constitute and appoint the Rt. Worshipful Henry Price, Provincial Grand Master of New England." In looking over the "Book of Constitutions," we read that, "A number of Brethren who had travelled, and many of whom were initiated into the mysteries of the Craft in *ancient* Lodges abroad, became emulous to cultivate the royal art in this western world," and consequently in 1752 the St. Andrew's Charter was granted. The petitioners having received from Scotland a Dispensation, dated Nov. 30th, 5752, from Sholto Charles Douglas, Lord Arberdour, then Grand Master, constituting them a regular Lodge, under the title of St. Andrew's, No. 82, to be holden at Boston, in the Province of Massachusetts."

In this connection we also cite the following, which will bear out our statement in reference to the origin and union

of the Grand Lodges of Massachusetts: "The first Grand Lodge in America was holden at Boston, on the 30th July, A.D. 1733, known by the name of St. John's Grand Lodge, and descended from the Grand Master of England. The Massachusetts Grand Lodge (also holden at Boston) was established on the 27th December, 1769, and descended from the Grand Master of Scotland. On the 19th of June, A.D. 1792, a Grand Masonic union was formed by the two Grand Lodges, and all distinctions between Ancient and Modern Masons abolished.*

This constituted the amalgamation of the two Grand Lodges of Massachusetts, which prior to the time of their union, exercised separate jurisdiction, as we have before stated.

In further confirmation of their union we quote from the "Book of Constitutions," page 212, as follows: "A committee was appointed in Grand Lodge, December 2nd, agreeable to the vote passed at a former meeting, March 2nd, 1787, to confer with the officers of St. John's Lodge, upon the subject of a complete masonic union throughout the Commonwealth, and to report at the next Quarterly Communication. The regulations and laws for associating the two Grand Lodges, as agreed to by the St. John's Grand Lodge, were read in Grand Lodge, March 5th, 1792, and deliberately considered, and the question for a concurrence being taken, were unanimously agreed to. A committee was also raised to adjust the business of the Grand Lodge, and deliver the books, papers, regalia, &c., into the archives of the New Grand Lodge."

For further proof of the recognition by them of each other's authority, we find at a special meeting called for the purpose of interring the Most Worshipful Grand Master Webb, April 17th, 1787, the following: "It was voted,

* Thomas Smith Webb.

that the honors of Masonry be observed at his interment, and that the St. John's Grand Lodge, and St. Andrew's Lodge be invited to attend with the Lodges under this Jurisdiction on this melancholy occasion." From this we learn the full and complete recognition, not only of each other's authority, but of fraternal relations existing between the two Bodies, which shows that they themselves did not recognize the exclusive jurisdictional claim now made by this committee in their name.

We also refer to modern writers, who not only concur in the statement already given, but also exhibit the masonic condition of the country during the existence of the two Grand Lodges to which reference has been made. In this they show that the present practices of American Grand Lodges in regard to States and Territories are of recent date, and form no part of the original landmarks. From the "Freemason's Magazine," vol. xiv. p. 257, we note the following in reference to this: "There is no written or statute law of universal application, on this subject, in this country or in Europe, of competent jurisdiction to enact such a law or statute. The rule, therefore, whatever it may be, looks for its authority to the common law or established practice of the fraternity in the country where its provisions are to be enforced. Prior to the revolutionary war, and the consequent separation of the North American Colonies from the mother country, this whole continent was open and free to every Grand Lodge in existence. It was a common field in which all might sow, and each reap according to its sowing. Hence among the early Lodges in America we find some acknowledging the authority of the Grand Lodge of England, others that of Scotland, and others again, of France. Nor did the establishment of Provincial Grand Lodges in the country by one of the parties, preclude, or interfere with the others. These remained intact and undisturbed. In 1733, the Grand Lodge of England granted the necessary powers

to Henry Price for the organization of a Provincial Grand Lodge in Boston, and in 1769, the Grand Lodge of Scotland granted similar powers to Gen. Warren, and a second Provincial Grand Lodge was opened in the same town. These two Bodies deriving their authority from separate and independent sources, continued to occupy the same ground, establish new Lodges, and exercise all the powers, and enjoy all the privileges, legitimately appertaining to Provincial Grand Lodges, until after the close of the revolutionary war, when they were united, and their separate powers ceased, as had previously their dependence on the parent Grand Lodges of England and Scotland." Thus the writer clearly admits a "common ground." By referring to "Chase's Digest of Masonic Laws," page 47, the above statement will find additional corroboration. It will be noticed that an effort is shewn on his part to give legality to this practice, eight years prior to its becoming a law ; while the above writer fixes it at the time of the union, which was not until 1792, for he says, "after that their separate powers ceased." (We allude to the Grand Lodge's jurisdictional claim, which Chase says dates from 1783, when he should have said 1792.) We are told by him that prior to 1783, this whole continent was open to every Grand Lodge in existence, and in that year one of the Grand Lodges of Massachusetts declared itself "free and independent of any other Grand Lodge, or Grand Master in the universe, and defined its power and authority as extending throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and to any of the United States where no other Grand Lodge is erected, over such Lodges only as itself had or should establish ; and declared that no person or persons ought or can use or exercise the powers or prerogative of Grand Master or Grand Lodge within any part of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the rightful and appropriate limits to which the authority of this Grand Lodge for ever after extends."

We repeat, notwithstanding the boldness of this assertion, that it never became a part of the masonic jurisprudence of Massachusetts until 1792, for neither the Massachusetts Grand Lodge that asserted it, nor the St. John's Grand Lodge whose existence denied it, lived long enough to see this principle recognized as a law. It is plain from the language used by Chase, that he admits a plurality of Lodges, as he says *one* of the Lodges ; which we again assert, refutes the claim. It was not until they ceased to exist as separate Grand Lodges that this principle became *valid as a law*, by being incorporated into the constitution of the one Grand Lodge for the State of Massachusetts ; thus showing the impossibility of this claim being legalized during the existence of the separate Grand Lodges ; and it is clear and conclusive that it could not be valid until their union, which did not occur until 1792, from which year this claim dates. The old "Book of Constitutions" fixes it thus : "This Grand Lodge, organized March 5th, A.L. 5792, by a complete union of the late St. John's and Massachusetts Grand Lodges, shall forever hereafter be known by the name of *the Grand Lodge of the Most Ancient and Honorable Society of Free and Accepted Masons for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.*"

Thus it appears that all Scottish and English masonic authority in Massachusetts was annihilated by these two Grand Lodges, viz., St. John's and Massachusetts, by striking themselves from the lists of their mother Lodges in England and Scotland, and thereupon of course, as masonic bodies, ceased, even "supposing them to have ever been any thing but irregular organizations," but they never were any thing else, as they were never organized in accordance with American masonic jurisprudence.*

From the above extract we glean certain facts. First.

* See Appendix II.

That the territorial claim now conceded to the Grand Lodges of the several States of the Union is of American origin, and is confined to American practice, and therefore forms no part of the old landmarks whatever. Secondly. That, until the consolidation of the two old Grand Lodges of this State (Massachusetts), which did not occur until 1792, it constituted no part of the masonic system; so that prior to that year, as stated, "this whole American continent was open and free to every Grand Lodge in existence; a common field, in which each might sow and reap according to its ability or pleasure." Among these sowers was the Grand Lodge of England, which, in the year of grace 1784, was pleased to grant to our fathers the Charter 459, now safely deposited in the archives of our Lodge, there to be forever preserved.

You will bear in mind that this Charter was granted in 1784, eight years prior to 1792, so that whatever action may have been had by the Convention of 1792, out of which emanated the present Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, could not, by any possible construction, abridge or affect our masonic status, any more than the establishment of the Grand Lodge of Canada could affect the rights of the Lodges existing in that province, prior to, or after, its organization as a Grand Lodge. We find this sustained by reference to the "Freemasons' Magazine," vol. xviii. page 115, thus: "The reason for this is that the Lodges in the lower province, which composed the Provincial Grand Lodges of Quebec and Three Rivers, did not join the secessionists, but remained true to their obligations and allegiance. The mother Grand Lodge very properly protects them in their rights and jurisdiction, and she will also continue her protection over these Lodges in Canada West which have not yet joined the new organization." What less could she have done, for, as a hen covereth her young with her wings, so is a Grand Lodge in duty bound

to shelter her brood under the cover of her protection, until, by their own free act, they shall elect to sever their respective connections. This principle, so long as their allegiance is not violated, will forever hold good, as it is the imperative duty of the mother Grand Lodge to render such protection.

In view of the facts we have set forth relative to the dates of the establishment of the Grand Lodges of Massachusetts, and that of our own, a stranger to American masonic writers would be unable to comprehend the following extract, coming as it does from such authority as the "Freemason's Magazine," May, 1866, page 198, relating to our Lodge and its Charter, which regardless of truth, says: "It was stricken from the registry of the Grand Lodge of England about the year 1813, and its lawful existence was then of course terminated, supposing it to have ever been anything other than an irregular organization. But it never was anything else. Its original establishment in Boston was a violation of the jurisdictional rights of the Grand Lodges of Massachusetts; and therefore waiving the question of color, it could never have been recognized by them or any other masonic body as a lawful Lodge." "If the establishment of Provincial Grand Lodges in the country by one of the parties" did not "preclude or interfere with the rights of the others," how and in what manner possible could a subordinate Grand Lodge "preclude or interfere with" the authority of the Supreme Grand Lodge to the extent of declaring its acts irregular and clandestine? I think we may be able to learn.

Granting it to be true for the sake of argument (as we have never been notified of this act, or even heard of it, only through this source), that our Charter was stricken from the registry of the Grand Lodge of England about the year 1813, the writer under notice has been somewhat unfortunate in the selection of dates, in as much as he selects the year of our Lord 1813, — a time when all intercourse between

the two countries, England and America, was forbidden by law, and had been for one year prior to the date named. Nor was it until two years afterwards that any intercourse was allowed. It may be now necessary to enquire into the reasons for such action as is here attributed to the Grand Lodge of England. And if we find that we judge aright, we shall challenge the masonic history of the world to shew for acts of fidelity to country, a similar action upon the part of the country's enemies. We say, will it not be remembered that war between the United States and England was then being waged, and had been for some time? Nor had there been any cordial friendship on either side since the revolution, for Headley says: "The peace which closed our revolutionary struggle was like a wound healed only at the surface, and which must be opened anew before a permanent cure can be effected." And again, we quote his authority in this statement, that as "late as 1790-91, the defeats of Generals Harmer and St. Clair on the northeastern frontiers were not owing to the inefficiency of American soldiers nor to Indian prowess, but to British interference and encouragement. The Indians were not the first from whom the British authorities endeavored to obtain aid by their friendly manifestations, for it is plain there must have been some motive which led the English in their Army Lodges to confer the degrees of Freemasonry upon our fathers. We are led to believe that this and other acts of kindness made manifest to them at this particular time on the eve of a revolution, attracted the attention of the statesmen of that age in our country, among whom was no less a personage than Thomas Jefferson, as the following from his pen will shew: "He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him; capturing and carrying them into slavery in another

hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare—the opprobrium of infidel powers—is the warfare of the Christian King of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where *Men* should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or restrain this execrable commerce. And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which *he* has deprived them; thus paying off former crimes committed against the liberties of one people with crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another.”

The above, coming as it does from that eminent statesman, leads us to believe that the favors and overtures made to our fathers were made in the expectation of receiving aid and comfort from us in return, but history shews that if this expectation was entertained, it was equally disappointed, as proved by the heroism on the side of freedom of the colored patriots at Bunker Hill, Red Bank, and Yorktown. In the second war, their valor at New Orleans called forth encomiums from General Jackson himself, as is familiar to all. And in Congress, the Hon. Charles Miner, of Pennsylvania, declared that the African race made excellent soldiers; “large numbers of them (says he) were with Perry, and helped to gain the brilliant victory of Lake Erie. A whole battalion of them were distinguished for their orderly appearance.” Dr. Clark, in the Convention of New York, in 1821, said: “On Lakes Erie and Champlain, where your fleet triumphed over a foe superior in numbers and engines of death, your ships were manned in a large proportion with men of color.”

Whittier also gives expression to the following: “On the capture of Washington by the British forces, it was judged expedient to fortify without delay the principal towns and

cities exposed to similar attacks. The vigilance committee of Philadelphia waited upon three of the influential colored citizens, namely, James Porten, Bishop Allen, and Absalom Jones, soliciting the aid of the people of color in erecting suitable defences for the city. Accordingly twenty-five hundred colored men assembled in the State House yard, and from thence marched to Gray's Ferry, where they labored for two days almost without intermission. Their labors were so faithful and efficient, that a vote of thanks was tendered them by the committee."

The condition of the country at that time called for the patriotic acts of all her children, as much so as in the revolution, and our fathers, notwithstanding the manifestations of friendship on the part of the English, were not found wanting; but, animated with the same zeal that characterized them in revolutionary times, wherever our country's flag was unfurled, there their patriotism and devotion were concentrated. In view of this fidelity to our country, and after these acts of seeming ingratitude to our English friends, how else could they have regarded us except as ingrates? To this only can we attribute their action in striking our Lodge from the registry of their Grand Lodge (if such was the case), for that body has never informed us of its being done at any time. Could we have acted otherwise under the circumstances? No! And we feel proud that our fathers' love of country rose superior to the petty inducements offered by the British government, and that their names have come down to us untarnished, even by our bitterest foes.

We again repeat that the condition of the country called for the patriotic acts of all her children, and we quote history to substantiate the statement: "When war was declared by Congress against Great Britain, in June 1812, it was believed that the majority of the people considered it unnecessary, and that it would prove injurious to the United States.

In the New England States, and especially in Massachusetts, this was undoubtedly the prevailing opinion, and it proved to be highly disastrous and distressing. During the three years it continued, the loss of property was very great to the citizens ; particularly to those who had an interest in commerce and navigation. And besides the absolute and total loss of vessels and their rich cargoes, business was suspended in a great measure, the vessels were rotting at the wharves, and large numbers of men who were employed as seamen, or who found it profitable in laboring for merchants, were without business and without wages. Some of these turned their attention to agriculture, some to manufactures ; but many had no occupation at all. The privations and sufferings of the people for part of the time were almost as severe as in the war for independence."

There are several facts connected with the above history.

1st. The condition in which the country was placed at that time.

2d. Being upon the eve of a revolution, a collision seemed inevitable.

3d. Each party to the contest measured its own strength, and, knowing that the colored portion of the inhabitants numbered more than five hundred thousand souls, it is plain that each party (English and American), as is shewn by the facts quoted from the first Declaration of Independence, desired to secure, if possible, the aid of the colored men. From these facts we are induced to believe, that the English more readily received them into such fraternal relations as conferring upon them all the rights of Masonry, while the Americans on the other hand, gave them only such "glittering generalities" as the above cited, and such as were retained in the Declaration of Independence, that "all men are created equal," &c. But their love of freedom being greater than that of Masonry, their love of home despite its unjust laws, their love of country, and their hatred for

slavery and the slave trade, forced them into the American lines, under the delusive hope that the Declaration of Independence would be to them and their posterity a living reality.

From what we have shown it follows, that, if our Lodge was indeed struck from the registry of the Grand Lodge of England, it was from malice towards us because of our fidelity to our country; and that in the hour of her peril we discountenanced the friendship of her enemy; hence our challenge to the masonic world.

To the credit of the English Masons be it said, however, that they were not despicable enough to taunt or upbraid us with it, but left it to the Americans for whom we fought.

"Its original establishment in Boston," the "Freemasons' Magazine" affirms, "was a violation of the jurisdictional rights of the Grand Lodges of Massachusetts; and therefore waiving the question of color, it could never have been recognized by them or any other masonic body as a lawful Lodge."

We would ask how, and why was it so? Was it not in consequence of our color? We find, as already stated, that "this continent was a common ground on which all could stand with equal rights — a common field in which all might sow, and each reap according to his sowing." By reason of this language it could not have been for want of authority on the part of the Grand Lodge of England to grant the Warrant in 1784, instituting the Lodge; and that we may again shew that the "jurisdictional" claim was not valid until 1792, we repeat the former statement as it is embodied in the report of the Eminent and Most Worshipful Grand Master, the Rev. Geo. M. Randall: "In 1733, R.W. Henry Price, of this city, received from England the first Charter ever received on this continent. This Charter conferred Grand Lodge powers. In the year 1752, *St. Andrew's Lodge* received from Scotland a Charter, which resulted in the

establishment of another Grand Lodge, and so there were here two rival Grand Lodges. In the year 1792, they united, and formed what is now our Grand Lodge of Massachusetts."

This completed the work, and the one Grand Lodge of the Most Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, was thus duly organized, and remains in full force to this day.

The practice which we have said is exclusively American, was the beginning of the peculiar system now in practice, namely, of a Grand Lodge bound by geographical lines (we allude to State limits), supremely controlling all Masons within their boundaries. We say peculiar, because born of the spirit of slavery, and in violation of the ancient practices, being, as it was, unknown to the masonic system. But Chase informs us that all the Grand Lodges of Europe have concurred in this "*well settled policy* [as he terms it] *of the Grand Lodges of the Union,*" with the single exception of Hamburg. Thanks be to God for this act of Hamburg.

Thus we find one Grand Lodge in Europe discountenancing the wrong, and persistently clinging to the principles of justice. Never may she be brought to bow to the sceptre of slavery under which this exclusive practice was inaugurated, but long may she continue to realize the grandeur of the unseverable link cementing universal truth to our ancient institution. May she continue to preserve this great, undeniable right belonging to Grand Lodges unimpaired and inviolate, by continuing to refuse her concurrence in this "*well settled policy of the Grand Lodges of the Union,*" to which her sister Grand Lodges of Europe have so unhappily bowed. As the spirit of slavery descends in the West, so also will this twin relic of the defunct system be numbered with the practices of the barbarous past, and the genius of universal brother-

hood will break forth from the East, shedding its refulgent rays into the darkest recesses and warming and revivifying the remotest corners of civilization, bringing with it love to God and man. Then will this ancient right of Grand Lodges be resuscitated and acknowledged by the Lodges of Europe and America, and the honor of maintaining this principle will be due to the free, enlightened, and unprejudiced Grand Lodge of Hamburg. We congratulate her for her determined stand, and implore her in the name of liberty and justice to keep herself clothed in the garments of freedom, so that this principle, beaming upon her sister Lodges of other climes, may be the means of ridding them of the chilly frost of prejudice and at last bring them to the knowledge of truth, for which she so nobly contends.

We again repeat, that this peculiar system now in practice, namely, of a Grand Lodge controlling all Masons within her boundary, is a violation of the ancient practices. The proof of its being a violation will be seen in its tendencies to that of Babel, which Mackey thus describes: "At Babel, what has been called spurious Freemasonry took its origin. That is to say, the people there abandoned the worship of the true God, and by their dispersion lost all knowledge of his existence, and of the principles of truth upon which Masonry is founded. Hence it is that our traditional ceremonies speak of the lofty tower of Babel as the place where language was confounded and Masonry lost." Among the first signs of the Babel tendencies of the Masons of this country, is seen the confusion of their language. At one time we are told that, "prior to the revolutionary war and the consequent separation of the North American Colonies from the mother country, this whole continent was open and free to every Grand Lodge in existence." Then, on the other hand, it is charged, that by reason of a Grand Lodge having been established in 1733, fifty-one years before the Charter of our Lodge was granted, that the

mother Grand Lodge had no right to grant such a Charter as 459, notwithstanding it said, "it was a common ground on which all could stand with equal rights — a common field in which all might sow, and each reap according to her sowing" (that is, each Grand Lodge then in existence, enjoyed and exercised these common rights). Then, again it is said, speaking of our Lodge, "waiving the question of color, it could never have been anything else but an irregular and clandestine body."

Notwithstanding this, the same writer, in volume seventh of the same periodical, says: "We always understood that Scott represented to the authorities at London (the Duke of Cumberland being Grand Master), that the petitioners were *white* persons, and that on the strength of his misrepresentations in this and other respects, the Charter, after having been withheld for two or three years subsequent to its date, was finally sent out, and the Lodge was organized under the immediate auspices of Mr. Prince Hall, a colored person, at that time of some distinction among his own people in this city."

We presume that the above is as true a statement as that of "striking our Lodge from the registry" of the Grand Lodge of England, as it comes from the same source, and therefore the same material. Is it true that Scott could have induced the authorities in England so to believe? If you will turn to vol. xix. p. 142, of the "Freemasons' Magazine," you will there find a copy of the Warrant said to be obtained by Scott, and containing this plain and undisguised language: "Know ye, that we do constitute the said brethren into a regular Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, under the title and denomination of the *African Lodge*."

The above writer would have us believe that the Grand Lodge of England was persuaded to grant a Charter to white men under the title or denomination of AFRICAN LODGE!

We have additional proof of the incorrectness of this statement, as it appears by our records that the Lodge placed its petition in the hands of Gregory, one of its own members, by whom it was conveyed to England, and who, by order of Prince Hall and the Lodge committed it, together with the instructions received, to a member of the Grand Lodge of England — Brother William Moody — who presented it in due form to that body, and through whose agency it was granted.

Prince Hall was informed of the action taken in reference to said petition, by a letter dated June 21, 1785, through the kindness of Capt. Washington, in which Br. Moody says : "In accordance with your petition, I have obtained the Constitution from the Grand Lodge, and from time to time have solicited Brother Gregory, your representative, to take it from the Grand Secretary, but he has always failed to do so." To which Prince Hall replied, acknowledging receipt of the above letter, and expressing his gratitude in the following :

BOSTON, MASS., Aug. 12, 1785.

MR. WILLIAM MOODY :

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL SIR, — I received yours of the 21 of June, through the politeness of Capt. Washington, in which you inform me that you have got the Constitution from the Grand Lodge of England in accordance with my letter in behalf of the African Lodge, for which kindness receive our gratitude. We are sorry that our brother Gregory, when in London, and after you had so often pressed him to do his duty, failed to take the Charter from the Grand Secretary. By Capt. Scott I forward you an order, and you will oblige me by transmitting the document through him.

Wishing prosperity to you and the Lodge,

I am your affectionate Brother,

PRINCE HALL.

Our records do not show, nor can we conjecture where the writer in the "Freemasons' Magazine," finds authority for saying that Capt. Scott "procured of the Grand Lodge of England the Charter for Prince Hall and his associates."

It was not until the Charter was obtained and in the possession of the Grand Secretary two years, that Capt. Scott, leaving this port for England, was requested to deliver a letter to William Moody, who entrusted the document to Capt. Scott, who, up to this time knew nothing relative thereto, as our record shows; and it does not appear that he was even conscious of the importance of his charge, having accepted it only as a *common carrier*.

The document having been received, Prince Hall announced it in one of the Boston papers, returning the thanks of himself and associates to Capt. Scott on the 30th April, 1787, for having brought the document entrusted to his keeping safely over. On a strange misapprehension of this fact, the writer under notice gives to Capt. Scott — who was merely the carrier of the document — the credit due to Br. Gregory, and more especially to Br. Moody.

Our censor, it will be observed, graciously talks about "waiving the question of color." Let us ask who among such writers ever does waive the question of color? It would have been as appropriate to have suggested the propriety of waiving the whole question at issue, for it is that of color, and nothing else; and the day in which that is waived there will be no longer any question at issue. The writer admits this in the same article, for in speaking of us he says: "Whatever might be the effect should any of them emigrate to Hayti, or any of the other West India Islands, or England, or wherever else the color of the skin is not a disqualification for admission to a Masonic Lodge, — supposing them to know enough of Masonry to pass the required examination, — it is impossible to say; nor is it a matter about which we need concern ourselves."

The above language is without cover or concealment, — plain

and comprehensive, — solving the whole question of the difference between us and them, in as much as it admits that the color of our skin disqualifies us from the enjoyment of the rights belonging to us as men and Masons in this country. It sets at defiance that great principle upon which the masonic system rests, viz., that of natural justice and the equality of all God's children, as recognized in every lesson taught by our Institution from the beginning of time. We cite one, thus, "Take care that the progress of friendship be not confined to the narrow circle of national connections, or particular religions ; but let it be universal, and extend to every branch of the human race." We have been led to believe that the book of the law was the Mason's guide ; if so, we would ask, does the spirit here evinced comport with such lessons as these : "For there is no respect of persons with God" ; and since this article has respect to persons, and is received and accepted by our white brothers, as is seen by their practice in their adherence to the words "*free born*," we shall offer them another lesson from the same authority, and, if we mistake not, applicable to many who, in these days, are invested with white aprons : "If a man says, I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar ; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen."

Again, in the December number of the "Freemasons' Monthly Magazine" for 1867, in reply to an article in the Boston "Commonwealth," concluding with this sentence : —

"The event in itself, aside from the parties immediately concerned, has no particular interest, save that it is the first time in the history of Masonry in this State that a colored man has been admitted to white fellowship, which, we sincerely trust, is the dawn of a new era in fraternal association, and the first step towards bringing the African Lodges of this State into harmonious relations with the Massachusetts Grand Lodge."

The above named journal, though an advocate of human rights, has no masonic department, nor do we know of a single weekly or daily journal devoted to the cause of human liberty, or loyalty to the government of the country, that has such a department. On the other hand, the most vile, seditious and pro-slavery sheets, such as the Boston Saturday "Evening Express," the La Crosse "Democrat," and others of a like character, have such a department. We say character, for they are so filled with profanity of language and obscenity of expression that all respectable men exclude them from their firesides, so that the question arises: If men are known by the company they keep, why should not the Freemasons of this country be known by the company they keep, or in other words, by the journals advocating their cause?

In giving the reply of which we spoke, we are reminded of the old maxim: "*The devil sick, a saint would be; the devil well, a devil would be!*" so that in the days of Anti-Masonry, when the Masonic Institution was "SICK," from the persecutions through which it had to pass, it could teach Masonry in its purity, as the following from an address delivered by the editor of the above named Magazine in 1836, shews:—

"Masonry inculcates no enmity to kings and popes, as such;—and prescribes no particular political nor religious creed to the brotherhood. Such a practice would be utterly incompatible with the universality of the Order. Yet she is not altogether indifferent upon these points. She has her politics and her religion; but not the politics of a *party* nor *country*—not the religion of a priest nor sect. Her theology is founded on the great fundamental truths of natural religion. Her political creed maintains the NATURAL EQUALITY OF MANKIND,—admits of no rank except the precedence due to merit, and sanctions no aristocracy except the unobtrusive nobility of *virtue*. Such are the sole political

and religious features of our Institution ; — terrible only to tyrants and bigots, the most dreaded scourges of humanity.”

Not only did they thus express themselves, but our brethren in many places were called upon to assist in the working of their Lodges, especially where the whites, from fear of the then public sentiment, or from indisposition, failed to attend to their Lodge duties. This means was resorted to in order to save their Charters, for in some instances, these were returned for want of the number required by masonic law to open their Lodges. Colored men not only aided in *opening their Lodges*, but assisted masonically in *burying their dead*, and were accounted good enough for fellowship then. But, in these days, the Institution having overcome its persecutors, and enjoying health, prosperity, and peace, mark the contrast in his reply to the article in the “Commonwealth” : —

“Such a thing as the recognition of the existing African Lodges in this city, or anywhere else in this country, by the Grand Lodge of this State, is among the impossibilities, except through such an utter disregard of the laws of the Institution and of masonic obligation as is not to be anticipated. All the existing African Lodges in the country, without a single exception, are self-constituted or without legal authority. The first colored Lodge in this city, was opened about the close of the last century, under a Charter granted by the Duke of Cumberland, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England ; but the grant was in violation of the jurisdictional rights of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, and therefore an illegal act and void. The Lodge was never recognized by any Grand Lodge in America ; and, in 1813, the Grand Lodge of England erased it from its books. Its Charter should then, at least, have been returned to the body from which it was originally received ; but it was not so returned, and has since been held by different parties as *quasi* authority for their irregular proceedings. It is entirely worthless.”

“Let wretches at our manhood rail;
 But those who once our judgment prove,
 Will own, that we who build so well,
 With equal energy can love.”

In this matter of “*self-constituting*,” of “*jurisdictional rights*,” of “*erasing from the books of the Grand Lodge of England*,” and of our “*Charter being worthless*,” we will leave to the judgment of the masonic world, which will pronounce against them or us.

What a difference between the spirit of tyranny and that of liberty; more especially when the tyrant dwells in a land of liberty and the patriot in that of tyrants, as is here evinced. Contrast the above with the following:—

MONSUMMANO, June 21, 1867.

BELOVED BROTHER,—I associate myself freely in soul with your manly resolution admitting *all colored brethren* into your Lodges. “He is the Lord of the cedars of Lebanon as well as of the hyssop which grows best in the deepest recesses of the valley.”

The G.·A.· of the U.· dispenses light and air to the lion and the lamb, and holds to each an equal measure; and he fecundates the seed for the ant as well as for man.

Your great republic—the palladium of the world’s freedom—ought not now to falter in the path of the emancipation of all races, sanctified, as it has been, by so much blood and heroism.

An affectionate and triple embrace to the brothers, from
 Yours, for life,

G. GARIBALDI, 33°.

“Spirit of power and might! behold
 Thy willing servant here,
 With thy protection him infold,
 And free his heart from fear!”

We have said how sad the fact that the masonic historian is not yet freed from the blighting curse of hatred of the negro, the consequence, or rather the offspring of slavery. What havoc has it not made in the future reputation of our great masonic writers of whom posterity will judge? For example, see their endeavors to suppress, becloud, misrepresent; or their failure to represent at all, the passing events relating to the colored Masons of our land. We find in vol. vii. "Freemasons' Magazine," 1848, page 263, the following: "We understand that a body of colored persons has recently been organized in this city under the name of '*Prince Hall Grand Lodge.*' It claims to be a masonic body, and to have under its jurisdiction one or more subordinate Lodges, and we believe one or more Chapters; or, at all events, there are colored persons connected with it, who claim to be R.A. Masons. We understand also that they derive their authority to form a Grand Lodge from a body, located either in New York or Philadelphia, styling itself the '*General Grand Lodge of the United States.*'" (Supposing it to be true, as has been here stated, that we had but one subordinate Lodge, — would we have been without precedent?).

By the above we are to learn that our democratic form of Lodge government, — or in other words, our association of Grand Lodges throughout the nation into one common whole, forming a compact whose combined authority is recognized by each, — this, I repeat, was understood by them and made public as early as the year 1848. From that time they have been fully aware that the old Warrant, 459, to which they are wont, at all times to refer, could not be regarded by us as having any masonic authority whatever; any more so than the old Charter of St. John's Grand Lodge can possibly have had among them, since the year 1792. It would be as appropriate to look to one for masonic authority as to the other, for

both are dead, masonically speaking. In saying that it is dead, we are not to be understood as saying that its importance with us is under estimated, for we deem it right and proper to exhibit it whenever necessary, for refuting such statements as the following, addressed to the Grand Master of Vermont : —

"So far as I have ascertained, the blacks have once possessed a Charter from England, which Charter (a copy being taken) was returned to its source for alteration, and was never sent back to this country, and the copy of the aforesaid is all the blacks now have.

"But I shall endeavor to see that instrument, and will then notify you of the facts, &c.

"Trusting to have at some time the honor of a personal interview,

"I am fraternally yours,

"WINSLOW LEWIS, *Grand Master*." *

We have the charity to believe, from the many acts of friendship made manifest to us by the writer, that when the above lines were written he was not aware of the (present) existence of our old Warrant, 459, which we here annex : —

"A. G. M. To all and every our Right Worshipful and loving Brethren, we, Thomas Howard, Earl of Effingham, Lord Howard, &c., &c., &c., Acting Grand Master under the authority of His Royal Highness, Henry Frederick, Duke of Cumberland, &c., &c., &c., Grand Master of the Most Ancient and Honorable Society of Free and Accepted Masons, sends greeting :

"Know ye, that we, at the humble petition of our right

* See "Freemasons' Magazine," vol. xvi. 1855.

trusty and well beloved Brethren, Prince Hall, Boston Smith, Thomas Sanderson, and several other Brethren residing in Boston, New England, in North America, do hereby constitute the said Brethren into a regular Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, under the title or denomination of the African Lodge, to be opened in Boston aforesaid, and do further at their said petition, hereby appoint the said Prince Hall to be Master, Boston Smith, Senior Warden, and Thomas Sanderson, Junior Warden, for opening the said Lodge, and for such further time only as shall be thought proper by the Brethren thereof, it being our will that this our appointment of the above officers, shall in no wise affect any future election of officers of the Lodge, but that such election shall be regulated agreeable to such By-Laws of the said Lodge as shall be consistent with the general laws of the society, contained in the Book of Constitutions; and we hereby will and require you, the said Prince Hall, to take especial care that all and every the said Brethren are, or have been regularly made Masons, and that they do observe, perform, and keep all the rules and orders contained in the Book of Constitutions; and further, that you do, from time to time, cause to be entered in a book kept for that purpose, an account of your proceedings in the Lodge, together with all such rules, orders, and regulations, as shall be made for the good government of the same, that in no wise you omit once in every year to send to us, or our successors, Grand Masters, or to Rowland Holt, Esq., our Deputy Grand Master, for the time being, an account in writing of your said proceedings, and copies of all such rules, orders, and regulations as shall be made as aforesaid, together with a list of the members of the Lodge, and such a sum of money as may suit the circumstances of the Lodge and reasonably be expected, towards the Grand Charity. Moreover, we hereby will and require you, the said Prince Hall, as soon as conveniently may be, to send an

account in writing of what may be done by virtue of these presents.

"Given at London, under our hand and seal of Masonry, this 29th day of September, A.L. 5784, A.D. 1784.

"By the Grand Master's Command.

"R. HOLT, *D.G.M.*

"Attested, WM. WHITE, *G.S.*"*

[Seal of the Grand Lodge of Masons in London.]

The above is the Warrant said to be struck from the list of Lodges, and is further said to be an ordinary Charter, &c., &c. In an ordinary Charter we find such words as these: "And we do enjoin upon our Brethren of the said Lodge, that they be punctual in the payment of such sums as may be assessed for the support of the Grand Lodge," &c. There is an important difference in this respect. The ordinary Charter enjoins the payment of such sums of money as the Grand Lodge shall from time to time determine for its own support, with penalties of forfeiture in case of failure to comply therewith. We, on the other hand, find no such language contained in Charter 459. It requires us to forward "*copies of all such orders and regulations, together with such a sum of money as may suit the circumstances of the Lodge and reasonably be expected, towards the Grand Charity.*" It follows, therefore, that there was never anything due from us to the Grand Lodge of England, save and except what in our judgment we might find convenient to transmit. So we could not have been stricken from the registry on account of arrears of dues.

As for our friend, Grand Master Winslow Lewis, we know that since the letter was penned, he has seen, closely scrutinized, and pronounced the above warrant genuine and original. We, not being aware of the above statement at the time of its publication, of course had nothing to say

* See "Freemasons' Magazine," vol. xv., 1855.

on that occasion ; but we now call upon him to place himself aright in reference to this historic fact.

Injurious statements like the above, coming from one whom we regard as a friend, naturally encourage such misrepresentations as the following, coming as they generally do, from men of lower moral standing, who would seize on anything to misrepresent and malign us : "On surrendering the Charter, *which was never returned to it*, a copy was kept, and, after the Lodge had been dormant for several years, it was revived *with this copy* by the persons in possession of it."

We find the above in a "Report" made by William Wroth, of Maryland, to the Grand Lodge of that State.

Here let us do justice to that chivalrous act of Brother William B. Kendall, P.G.M. of our Grand Lodge, who rushed through the fire that destroyed so many of our valuable and inestimable masonic records, the loss of which is irretrievable, but who rescued this, our old Warrant, from the devouring flames — that Warrant which stands as a proof of our legitimate masonic birth. To Brother Kendall's courage and devotion we owe its preservation and existence to this day.

Prince Hall Grand Lodge was organized out of the Rising Sun, St. John's, and the Celestial Lodges, and, after being so organized as a Grand Lodge, was received and admitted into the National Grand Lodge as a member thereof ; and this Grand Lodge so organized, is said to have had "one or more subordinate Lodges." We would ask, what is here meant but to insinuate that the requisite number from which to form a Grand Lodge was not in existence ; but, suppose it to be true, that we had but one subordinate, we had as many as the Massachusetts Grand Lodge had at its organization, as history shows *it had but one* : — "In the year 1752, St. Andrew's Lodge received a Charter from Scotland, which resulted in the establishment of the Massachusetts Grand Lodge."

Had we not also one more than the St. John's Lodge at its formation in 1733? We had three more, as its history shows; for it was not until after the organization of the St. John's Grand Lodge that a petition was presented for the chartering of the first Lodge; thus, "A petition was then presented by several worthy brethren residing in New England, praying to be constituted into a regular Lodge; and it was voted that the same be granted. This Lodge is styled the first Lodge in Boston, or St. John's Lodge."

Here we have a Grand Lodge without a subordinate. Some may endeavor to explain this away by saying it was in accordance with the practice then obtaining; our answer is that a true and lawful Grand Lodge can be formed in one way, and one way only. A certain number of Lodges, not less than three, holding Charters or Warrants, from some legal Grand Lodge, or different Grand Lodges, meet in convention, by their representatives, formally resolve to organize a Grand Lodge, adopt a Constitution, and proceed to elect their officers.

In "Mackey's Lexicon of Freemasonry," page 184, he says: "Grand Lodges are organized in the following manner: Three or more legally constituted Lodges working in any state, kingdom, or other independent political division, where no Grand Lodge already exists, may meet in convention, adopt by-laws, elect officers, and organize a Grand Lodge." This is in accordance with the example set by the four old Lodges which met at Apple Tree Tavern. And it matters not who may have instituted any other proceedings than the above landmarks as cited, we know they form no part of American jurisprudence, and none will claim any other practice as an original landmark than that adopted by the four old Lodges which formed the original Grand Lodge, and upon which every Grand Lodge in the country, whether they be white or colored, to day rests.

We are among those who believe in the inalienable rights

of Masons to establish, or not, a Grand Lodge for themselves, and that when a Grand Lodge is so established it should be the free act of the Masons whose Grand Lodge it is to be, and not the act of any other power whatever; thus believing, we assert, that so far as the right to establish a Grand Lodge is concerned, the action taken by the Masons of Massachusetts in 1792, accomplishing that object, was in accordance with the inalienable right belonging to them as Masons; and not only does this right belong to them, but to all Masons of every clime and in all ages, regardless of color or race, for right, in itself, is not confined to either. The only question then would be, Are those thus acting *true* and *perfect* Masons? This granted, their right is established. Nor is this a new idea, since in the formation of the several Grand Lodges of England, Scotland, Ireland, and all the Grand Lodges of the United States, to say nothing of those of other countries of Europe, we find this self-controlling authority descending to us and serving as a landmark, so that *we*, being *true* and *perfect* Masons, did right in establishing independent Grand Lodges for ourselves, which was in keeping with the practice established under this landmark. How else could it be when a Grand Lodge *de facto* must be self-constituting and supreme of itself, having derived its authority from the Masons who established it. So much for SELF-CONSTITUTING!

It is not to be understood that our supremacy as a Grand Lodge releases us in the least degree from any of the obligations which we have voluntarily assumed and entered into with the association of Grand Lodges under the title and denomination of a National Grand Lodge, any more so than a State in this Union can release herself honorably and lawfully from the obligations she is under to the national government, and which she voluntarily assumed when she became a part of the national compact. As our honor is pledged to the fulfilment of those obligations into which we

have entered, let us again, in honor to ourselves and fidelity to the National Grand Lodge, renew them. A Grand Lodge without honor, would be an anomaly, and justly entitled to the infamous cognomen of rebels, as would be our case should we, in the least degree, violate our pledged faith; which is, to maintain the unity and perpetuity of the National Grand Lodge, and for which end, brethren, let us concentrate our best energies, as it would be a sad spectacle to see us divided into parties, as was our condition prior to 1847, when we were *food for our enemies*, and which would to-day subject us to the pity, if not the scorn and contempt of the masonic world. From such a dilemma let us devoutly pray for deliverance, and as the prudent man seeth the evil and hideth himself, so let us avoid factions.

We here again assert that, in this country, all Grand Lodges are self-constituted, and that no Grand Lodge in the United States of America would to-day grant a Grand Warrant for the organization of a Grand Lodge in any state, territory, or country. To illustrate this, we will suppose that the Grand Lodge of Louisiana (which, by the way, we have never heard charged with any extra amount of masonic knowledge), or the Grand Lodge of Maryland, which has produced a few celebrated Masons, should, either, or both, grant Warrants to "a number of Brethren who had travelled, and many of whom were initiated into the mysteries of the Craft in *ancient* Lodges abroad" (or we may say just before Noah entered the ark, as the words above quoted mention no time or place, when or where they were initiated),* for the establishment of Grand Lodges in the territory of Idaho, would any of the Grand Lodges of the United States recognize the validity of such action on their part to such an extent as to refuse to grant Warrants for the establishment of subordinate Lodges to such Masons as should petition their several Grand Bodies for the proper authority to constitute Lodges in that territory?

* We allude to the petitioners who obtained the Massachusetts Charter.

We know they would not, but would utterly ignore such transactions, thus making good our assertion, and condemning, by their practice, any who have instituted or practised any other proceedings, otherwise than the original example handed down to us from the year 1717.

Had we, like our critics, began backwards in our system of Masonry, by the organization of Grand Lodges before subordinates, out of which to create Masons preparatory to the organization of a Grand Lodge, we should have been held up to the derision, if not to the scorn of the world. Thank heaven we began not so, but with a subordinate, and a Deputy Grand Master, granting Warrants to such Masons, as, in our subordinate Lodge, we did make, preparatory to the organization of other Lodges, and from them came our present Grand Lodge, and Grand Lodges throughout the country.

This leads us to bring to view the action taken in the organization of the present Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, which, as we believe, will not fail to impress every honest Mason with the wisdom and prudence, as well as the justice of our course of action as colored Masons in the organization of our Lodges and Grand Lodges in the United States. See "Old Constitution," page 212, thus: "That the political head of this country having destroyed all connection and correspondence between the subjects of these States and the country from which the Grand Lodge originally derived its commissioned authority, and the principles of the craft inculcating on its professors submission to the commands of the civil authority of the country they reside in: the brethren did assume an elective supremacy, and under it chose a Grand Master and Grand Officers, and erected a Grand Lodge, with independent powers and prerogatives, to be exercised, however, on principles consistent with, and subordinate to the regulations pointed out in the Constitutions of Ancient Masonry."

If we are to learn anything, it would seem to us, that the lesson here taught is, that Masons should not allow themselves to owe allegiance to any potentate or power of other countries longer than is necessary, save that to which they belong. This principle prevails in England, Ireland, and Scotland, as well as in other countries throughout Europe. Although England exercises supreme jurisdiction in a governmental point of view over the three divisions of the kingdom, nevertheless, the Masonic Fraternity is still divided into three separate and independent divisions, as seen in the above quotation. We, as colored Masons, are not only right in following the example set by them in our organization of an independent Grand Lodge, but justified in so doing, for it will be seen that the example was set before our white brothers and us, and that our action therefore, is founded upon precedents, as well as upon the natural right belonging to us as Masons, which can be better understood by what follows, quoted from the report of a committee of Masons of this State (Massachusetts) at the organization of the first independent Grand Lodge: "That in the history of our Craft we find, that in England there are two Grand Lodges independent of each other; in Scotland the same; and in Ireland their Grand Lodges and Grand Master are independent either of England or Scotland. It is clear that the authority of some of their Grand Lodges originated in assumption; or otherwise, they would acknowledge the head from whence they were derived." If we understand the above aright, we find therein contained a charge of assumption, while, on the other hand, and at the same instant, they admit that they were acting in the same spirit and organized their Grand Lodge accordingly, — that is, a Grand Lodge without law but in assumption.

We are forced to examine the distinguishing difference in the principles here involved, and ascertain, the difference, if there be any, that governed their fathers and ours in the

organization of Lodges and Grand Lodges. We have found this to be the difference, that what they did, because they were *white*, was *right*, but for our fathers to have done a less unlawful thing, since they were *colored*, was *wrong*! So that after all it comes to this : —

“ Man finds his fellow guilty of a skin,
Not colored like his own ; and having pow’r
To enforce the wrong, for such a *worthy cause*
Dooms and devotes him as his lawful prey.
Thus man devotes his brother, and destroys
And worse than all, and most to be deplor’d,
As human nature’s broadest, foulest blot,
Chains him, and tasks him, and exacts his sweat,
With stripes that mercy with a bleeding heart
Weeps when she sees inflicted on a beast!!!”

Again, we find in the “Freemasons’ Magazine,” 1866, expressions like these : in speaking of Prince Hall, it says, “he was the first Master of our Lodge ;” omitting the historical fact that he was not only the Master, but was a Deputy Grand Master, with all the powers and authority pertaining to that office, and as such Deputy, constituted the first Lodge in Pennsylvania and the first in Rhode Island, which together with 459, constituted the original African Grand Lodge.

And that his authority was known and recognized, not only by the Masons of Massachusetts but by our brethren throughout the country, will be seen by the following correspondence : —

PHILADELPHIA, March 2, 1797.

To the Right Worshipful Prince Hall, of the African Lodge, 459, of Boston : —

WORSHIPFUL SIR AND BROTHER, — We congratulate you for having been invested with the high and holy trust conferred upon you by the authorities in England, together with your success in obtaining the Warrant constituting African Lodge 459.

In the name of the most holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, we most respectfully solicit you, Right Worshipful Sir, for a Dispensation for an African Lodge. We are all ready to go to work, having all but a Dispensation.

We have been tried by five Royal Arch Masons. The white Masons have refused to grant us a Dispensation, fearing that black men living in Virginia would get to be Masons too.

We would rather be under you, and associated with our Brethren in Boston, than to be under those of the Pennsylvania Lodge; for, if we are under you, we shall always be ready to assist in the furtherance of Masonry among us.

We number eleven, of which number five are Masters.

Please send the Dispensation by one of the Brethren of the Lodge, directing him to the Rev. A. Jones, Minister of the African Church, who will extend to him the hospitalities of his home. We shall not fail to have the money ready for all charges. We give you the names of the Brethren: Peter Mantone, Acting Master, who, notwithstanding the amazing trial and strict examination by Br. Wilson, was elevated a Super-excellent, and was Arch and Royal Arch Knight Templar of Ireland, Carricfergus Lodge, Two Blues, No. 253. Peter Richmond, Jonathan Harding, John Davis, Robert Vendbel, Masters; these are Ancient York Masons. D. Butler, C. Brown, T. Peterson, J. Tucker, J. Daking, J. Henry, who were made in London in the Golden Lodge, No. 222.

I am,

Fraternally yours,

PETER MANTONE.

On the 22d day of the same month, Prince Hall replied, granting the required authority, viz., a Dispensation in the usual form, also advising them to receive none as members until they receive the Warrant, and their officers duly installed.

This fact is not only sustained by our Grand Lodge records, but may be found in the collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, of which the following is a specimen: "Having once and again mentioned this person, I must inform you that he is Grand Master of a Lodge of Freemasons, composed wholly of blacks, and distinguished by the name of the "African Lodge." It was begun in 1775, while this town was garrisoned by British troops; some of whom held a Lodge, and initiated a number of negroes. After the peace, they sent to England, and procured a Charter under the authority of the Duke of Cumberland, and signed by the late Earl of Effingham.* This established Prince Hall's masonic status. We find another sentence in the article above alluded to — speaking of those who petitioned the Grand Lodge of England for the old Charter, 459, it says: "Of the other petitioners we have no knowledge; nor does it appear from anything we have ever met with on the subject, where they obtained their Masonry, if they had any, or by what means they were enabled to satisfy the authorities at London that they were Masons."

For the life of us we cannot understand the meaning of this; we cannot see why such a query could be made. Is it not known and understood that all the English authorities had to do, was to turn to the records of the Lodge in which they were initiated, *passed*, and raised, to ascertain the facts? Nothing would seem more simple if they had only been *white*, but, being *blacks*, what a mystery?

We find that in 1733, the first Charter was granted to the Masons of the continent of America, and the Grand Lodge was organized with titles as follows: "Right Worshipful Henry Price, Right Worshipful Andrew Belcher, Right Worshipful Thomas Kennelly, and Right Worshipful John Quann." Now we ask the question: since this was

* The above extract is taken from the replies of Dr. Belknap to certain queries respecting the slavery and emancipation of negroes in Massachusetts.

the first Lodge on the continent of America, over what Lodges had these several brothers served as Masters to entitle them to such distinguishing honors as Right Worshipfuls? * And how were the petitioners who applied for St. Andrew's Charter, enabled to satisfy the authorities of Scotland "*where they obtained THEIR Masonry, if they ever had any?*"

We find on page 189 of the old "Book of Constitutions" what is said of them, and without better authority than is there given as evidence of THEIR Masonry, there is good reason to doubt if "THEY EVER HAD ANY!" Here is their history: "A number of brethren who had travelled, and many of whom were initiated into the mysteries of the Craft in *ancient* Lodges abroad, became emulous to cultivate the Royal Art in this western world, petitioned the Grand Master of Scotland for a Charter."

Have we not a right to doubt *their* Masonry? This we do, and for this reason, because it was doubted by those who lived and practised the rites at that time. Did not the St. John's Grand Lodge forbid masonic intercourse with their members, allowing only such to visit them as had formerly sat in their Lodges? We quote the language of the St. John's Grand Lodge to that effect: "They therefore refused any communications or visits from such members of St. Andrew's Lodge, as had not formerly sat in their Lodges, and this difficulty did not entirely subside for several years." We think our friends living in glass houses should not throw stones, knowing "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

Here, again, we appeal to the historian to do us that justice which we feel our masonic record entitles us to in the eyes of the unprejudiced world.

* We make this query in view of the following: "No brother can be a Warden until he has passed the part of a Fellow Craft; nor a Master until he has acted as a Warden, nor Grand Warden until he has been Master of a Lodge." — *Old Constitutions*, 1723.

If the friend of our race — the friend of humanity everywhere, whether in America, Europe or Africa — that man who knew no distinctions, save merit and virtue, and from whose inspiring counsel the widow, the orphan, the outcast, and even the slave, in his gloomiest hours found comfort and support, — (we allude to JOHN A. ANDREW, who was never dressed in that now so much dishonored garb, *a white apron*; yet, whose natural love for, and recognition of, the brotherhood of MAN, was prompted by the three tenets of our profession as Masons — brotherly love, relief, and truth — as shown by these memorable words: “*I know not what record of sin awaits me in the other world; but this I do know, that I never was so mean as to despise any man, because he was poor, because he was ignorant, or because he was black*”; — and who, as Governor, was the first, in his official capacity to recognize us as a Grand Lodge of Masons, as he did in 1864), — were yet alive, we should certainly call his attention to this article. We should do so because he always evinced an earnest desire for the promotion of our educational, moral, and religious interests. We should do so, because of the advice which he, on one occasion, gave in regard to our institutions in language like the following: “Whatever of associations, societies, or institutions you have among you, labor to make them respectable, for out of them will come your true respectability.” We say we would show this article to him as it would be an evidence of the truth of his prediction, that our respectability is set forth not by our friends, but acknowledged by those less friendly, as is here seen: —

“From what we have been able to learn from their printed documents, from their periodicals, the by-laws of their Lodges, and the published addresses of their more intelligent members, we are led to believe that they are a moral and benevolent association, and that they are doing much to relieve the necessities, to improve the social condition, and

elevate the intellectual status of their own people. If this be so, the purpose of their association is a commendable one, and they will receive, at least from that part of the community who care little for masonic relations, the encouragement which in their changed condition they so much need, and which is so essential to their personal welfare and usefulness." How strange a doctrine! Language like the above will affect every true Mason who, from the recess of his heart, is endeavoring to daily practise such lessons as were taught by the founders of the Masonic Institution, among which are these: "To wipe the tear from the eye of distress, to cheer the heart of the unfortunate, to clothe the naked, to feed the hungry, and prevent by anticipation the wants of the unfortunate. These have always been the practice of Masons." And yet, although it is admitted in the article from which we quote, that our organization is a "moral" and "benevolent" one, and doing much "to relieve the necessities, to improve the social condition, and elevate the intellectual status of our race," we are not to receive the countenance and support of a society claiming to have done so much for the advancement of civilization and the improvement of man. But, do this philanthropic and virtuous society recommend us in this article, to the favor of the masonic world? Not at all. It is only they who care little for masonic relations from whom we are to receive that encouragement which, in our "changed condition, we so much need." Would not this be a scandalous blot on the Masons of America, if indorsed by them?

Had this article from the Freemasons' Magazine been written before the war, or even when it was being waged, we might credit it to the spirit which took possession of the "Boston Pilot," when it expressed itself so bitterly against us.

We stand aghast at the ingratitude of that article, written as it was while the blood of Union soldiers, black and white, yet stained the infamous shambles of Salisbury prison; while

the sound of the bombardment of Fort Fisher still rung in loyal ears. We are justified in pronouncing the article an outrage upon the sacred ties of humanity, especially when we consider that it was written for the Lodge of North Carolina as an apology for the existence of a colored Lodge in that State, supposed to have been organized by the white Masons of New York.

We should charge them with desecrating the sacred ties of Masonry whose mission is love to man and peace to the great brotherhood. In glowing terms one of their number paints the virtues of the order thus : " When the wild savage leaped from his den in all the horrors of barbarian ferocity, and men knew no right but those of the strongest, Freemasonry, shackled but not destroyed, exerted itself in filial tenderness, paternal regard, an adoration for the deity, and gratitude for benevolent actions ! "

These are the virtues claimed by Masons. Yet, these virtues it would seem, belong to the barbarous past. The spirit seems to have fled, and, in its stead, hatred of the negro now reigns where virtue once held sway. As for American Masonry, we know of no kind or generous deed performed by it, at any time or under any circumstances, towards the colored men of our land. Nor can the historian pen in their praise such lines as these, for any act of theirs : — " Masons who glow with the love as well as the peace of mankind, have already wrested the fetters from the limbs of the galled Africans. The principal agent in this work of justice was Wilberforce. This is set to the credit of the Grand Lodge of England, and of it they may justly be proud ! Fitting work this, — performed by the Grand Lodge of England, in loosening the fetters of her enslaved, — which was in harmony with the early mission of the Masonic Institution, led by Moses of old, who conducted the children of Israel from the land of Egyptian bondage, to their promised Canaan, their land of Liberty !

On the other hand, what have we to say in praise of

the Masonic Institution of these United States? Are we permitted to cite a single act that we can denominate as charitable? Not one! But what do we find? In lieu of these acts we see the most malignant hatred toward us; and on reviewing the conduct of these white Masons, we venture to say that the article from which we quoted, together with the report of the Louisiana Committee, and that of the New York Committee on foreign correspondence, (the circumstances attending being fully made known) will be found without parallel, from the time of the sale of the first free African as a slave on the banks of the James, in Virginia, to that of the purchase (in which characteristic Yankee economy is shown) of the exact number of senators requisite for the acquittal of Andrew Johnson, on the Potomac at Washington.

To return to the subject, we ask where can you point out any similar effect produced by masonic influence in America? The Masons, particularly those of North Carolina and Virginia, may perhaps claim something, however, of which they can boast. It will be remembered that the people of those two States voted against seceding by large majorities; and yet we know that through the agency of some secret element they were at last compelled to secede. Now the question arises what secret agency was it that gave McCulloch such power in those States? Let the future historian answer this question. We will content ourselves with this brief allusion to a subject which may ultimately prove more important to the people of those States, and the Nation, than it now seems.

Alas, for the Masonic Institution of Massachusetts! Alas, for the dignity of the old Bay State, the home of the foremost champion in the United States for the rights of man, when one of her citizens, at such a time especially, could be found so dead to loyal patriotism and christian charity as to strike hands with the red-handed rebels, and try to outvie them in hatred of the negro! Did we merit this from the Masons of

Massachusetts, a State which was represented in the late rebellion, in the army and naval service, by not less than from seven to ten thousand men of color, many of whom were Masons; when our ratio would not have demanded more than one thousand six hundred? There was a man for every woman and child among us, so anxious were the colored race to serve her! But, witness further the ingratitude of Massachusetts Masons, "they claim," say they, "to be Masonic Associations, but of this we have no means of judging. If they be so, they are clandestine and irregular, and with them the Masons of this country, whether North or South, can hold no intercourse or communication."

If a Mason cannot be clandestinely made by a regularly established Lodge, how can a Lodge be clandestinely created by a legal and world-acknowledged Grand Lodge? Or how could the Grand Lodge of England clandestinely establish a subordinate Lodge, as is here charged? We can readily conceive of an "*irregular*" establishment, as in the case of the St. John's Grand Lodge in 1733, but it was not a clandestine body, nor would any Mason so consider it. Neither the masonic law nor the masonic practice recognize the absurdity that all acts irregularly performed are of necessity "ILLEGAL and CLANDESTINE." There are irregularities even in nature, and it would be as unjust to consider as clandestine a Lodge irregularly created, as it would be to consider a child illegitimate because by a freak of nature its birth had been hastened sixty days. But in our case there was neither irregularity nor illegitimacy, as was the unmasonic hastening of the birth of the St. John's Grand Lodge, which came into existence irregularly, as its own history shows. "CLANDESTINE — Secret; private; hidden; withdrawn from public view. It often bears an ill sense, as implying craft or deception." — *Webster*. If this definition is correct, then we think the word CLANDESTINE can be appropriately applied to the means used to obtain the Char-

ter for the Massachusetts Grand Lodge, which is this: "St. Andrew's Lodge united with Lodges No. 58, of the Registry of England, and No. 322, of the Registry of Ireland, then attached to the British Army," and by this means obtained the Charter. Now the query is, Did the authorities of Scotland know the character of Lodges 58 and 322, thus petitioning? and further, would they have granted a Grand Lodge Charter to these *portable* and *camp Lodges*, if such was known? We believe not. Then, if they did not know it, the Charter was *clandestinely* obtained; for there was but one Lodge, namely, St. Andrew's, who could rightfully and masonically petition for such a Charter.

Although there was no association of Masons organized as a Lodge or Lodges to petition the Grand Lodge of England for a Charter to organize a Grand Lodge in Massachusetts, yet we are informed that a Charter *was* granted on the petition of "a number of brethren residing in New England" for such a body. "Of this we have no means of judging, but if such was the case, *they* are 'IRREGULAR' if not 'CLANDESTINE'!" We will not say, however, that "the Masons of this country, whether North or South, can hold no intercourse or communication" with *them*, on account of the "IRREGULARITY" of their creation, as "it is a matter about which we need not concern ourselves," and, "*waiving the question of their COLOR*," we doubt that *they* knew "enough of Masonry to pass the required examination" by the Grand Lodge of England, necessary to obtaining *any* Charter for a Lodge, much less that of a Grand Lodge; as there was no Lodge on this continent in which their work could have been demonstrated. This being true, the mother Grand Lodge could not masonically, we think, grant such authority on the petition of any body of men, save and except they were organized as regular Lodges.

While it is said that our Charter was granted in the *usual*

form, and conferred no other authority than that of an "ordinary Charter," yet the Charter for the St. John's, obtained in this *extraordinary* manner, possesses, as *they* claim, the extraordinary authority which *they* exercised in constituting *extraordinarily* the several Lodges which we shall hereafter name. We say extraordinarily, as it would be a curiosity to see how many, and who they were that voted in the aforesaid Grand Lodge to grant the Charters for the several Lodges appearing below, but more especially, for the "first Lodge in Boston," or the St. John's as now called.

We see that an attempt was made in the organization of the Massachusetts Grand Lodge to avoid this dilemma, by bringing to her aid the FIG LEAVES, or in other words, the TWO CANVAS, or *Army Lodges* before referred to, which Lodges were removed from the State at the tap of the drum and the sound of the bugle, leaving St. Andrew's alone in her glory to grant Charters and establish Lodges under the assumed name and with all the prerogatives of a Grand Lodge. These Army Lodges were made use of in the vain hope to hide from the public gaze their inconsistency; which shows conclusively their knowledge of the *innovation* made by the Masons of the St. John's, who attempted to organize, as they *did*, a Grand Lodge entirely destitute of the elements properly belonging to such a body. Unmasonic as this was, it was an improvement upon the original St. John's Grand Lodge, as she represented one subordinate which aided in her legislation while the St. John's had none. We call attention to the location of the Lodges thus *extraordinarily* organized by this *extraordinary* Grand Lodge having the credit of being the *mother of Freemasonry in America*: —

The first, in Massachusetts, followed by others in New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Bermuda,

Antigua, Newfoundland, Louisburgh, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Surinam, and St. Christopher.

With this extraordinary beginning of Freemasonry in America, is it to be wondered that it has remained extraordinary to this day denying even the three first tenets of its own profession, — brotherly love, relief, and truth. Brethren, let us pray and hope that their bad beginnings will result in a glorious end, and that their last days may be their best.

It would seem that the more vehement the claims to righteousness, or the pretences that are made by men in behalf of institutions for the advancement of man, the more they are to be dreaded. For instance, we have the Catholics on one hand claiming to be the original in whose hands were placed the very keys of the kingdom of Heaven, while on the other hand we have the Masonic Fraternity laying claim to an earlier date of their mission to promote the interest of man, as given from God to Moses — that ancient Mason whom He commissioned as such to redeem enthralled Israel !

We repeat it would seem that the more vehement the claims or the pretences thus made, the more they are to be dreaded, and in proof of this we call attention to an article from the organ of the holy mother church above mentioned, edited by our adopted Irish fellow citizen in the interest of catholicism, who having fled from oppression abroad sought shelter in this our native land, and to whom, while so oppressed, we extended a sympathetic hand. And again, when they were cursed by famine, though poor and oppressed ourselves, we tendered them the widow's mite ; but alas, now that their yoke is off, their famine gone, witness their gratitude !

Extract from the "Boston Pilot."

"The blacks will neither bring up the rear with decency, nor lead at the front with honor, nor hold the middle with

respectable firmness. Their friends have gone too far. They are not yet fit to lead for such a great nation as this the noble career of arms. They are as fit to be the soldiers of this country, as their abettors are to be its statesmen."

"One Southern regiment of white men would put twenty regiments of them to flight in half an hour. *Twenty thousand negroes on the march would be smelled ten miles distant.* No scouts need ever be sent out to discover such warriors. There is not an American living that should not blush at the plan of making such a race the defenders of the national fame and power; and every American living, if he has any independent patriotism in his heart, will cry it down."

The "Pilot," however, had given vent to its spite before we were even permitted to enter the service, and consequently, before a life or a limb had been offered up. Having proved a false prophet, to this one we can afford to be magnanimous. While, on the other hand, the article of which we complain was written after the deeds of valor and suffering which the records of Fort Wagner, Milliken's Bend, Port Hudson, and the gory and sickening details of Fort Pillow recall.

Strange anomaly! Language like this coming from men who, in their fatherland, for seven hundred years or more, have been deprived of their liberties; and to-day are seeking the aid of the good to regain their lost rights. Surely, instead of placing themselves on the side of the oppressor, we think they would naturally, and for their country's sake, be in sympathy and act in concert with the enemies of tyrants everywhere. In lieu of this, what a spectacle is presented! they sympathize with, and are in league with tyrants, as the above article shows.

Notwithstanding this claim upon the part of these two associations for pre-eminent goodness, the fact is patent that without their succor the democratic party of to-day would not have been enabled to hurl the missiles of war against the

life of the nation. As these form the nucleus of the democratic party which plunged the country into all the horrors of war, upon this party must rest the responsibility for all the blood shed and for all the treasure expended in preserving the Union. Is this doubted? If so, take if you please, the support rendered by these two associations from the party, and when that is done there will be no democratic party left to trouble, by their treacherous proceedings, the peace of the country.

And more especially is the Masonic Fraternity responsible in this respect, as there are no other association of men, since the annihilation of the Southern Confederacy, that we know of in our country who have, as a basis, or fundamental law, such a provision as that requiring men to be "*free born*" for admittance into their association, as is the case with the Masonic Institution, sustained as it is by the following language: "It is just as much an integral and immovable part of the masonic system as the one requiring a belief in the existence of a Supreme Being; and we can admit an argument as to the right to abrogate *one* with the same propriety as the *other*." * By this we are to learn that a belief in slavery is as essential to the Mason as is the qualification requiring a belief in "the existence of a Supreme Being;" and this will continue as long as they are in league with tyrants, or in other words, the democratic party, that riotous and government destroying association, whose hands are now dripping with the blood of America's patriotic children.

These lamentable facts, together with a perpetual manifestation of this Anti-Masonic spirit on the part of our white brothers, cause us irrepressible grief; but, knowing that the time will yet come when their record in this respect will be made public, to their shame and confusion, we can safely trust the justice of our cause to the judgment of the good and

* "Principles of Masonic Jurisprudence," by John W. Simons.

true of all classes, who will, in time, see the intent and purposes of such articles. The writer chose to stir up the North to negro hatred, at a time when the South was wreaking its vengeance in blood for deeds done by us upon battlefields, as well as for the aid given to the union soldiers while wandering in the swamps of the South, endeavoring to make their way to the union lines. All this, and more, the rebels had to revenge upon us, and the article above cited could but encourage their murderous hands to fresh deeds of blood.

We will now call your earnest attention to the more serious consideration of the workings of this alleged jurisdictional claim, as it is not only injurious to us as men and Masons, but because it interferes, as we believe, with our higher duties to God. It reminds us of an old story which will serve to illustrate our case, we refer to that of the Agagite, Haman, who designed a gallows for his Israelite foe, but upon which he himself was hung. We think it will appear to the observing mind that has noted closely the workings of this *exclusive jurisdictional claim*, now in practice by the Grand Lodges of the United States, that it is detrimental to the spirit of religion, as well as the progress of true Freemasonry; and, so far as its practice is concerned, will be as fatal to itself as was Haman's gallows to himself. This will be better understood by an enquiry into the qualifications of a candidate for admission into the Order, especially in reference to his belief. Mackey answers the question, saying that, "A BELIEF IN THE EXISTENCE OF GOD AS THE GRAND ARCHITECT OF THE UNIVERSE, is one of the most important Landmarks of the Order. It has been always deemed essential that a denial of the existence of a Supreme and Superintending Power, is an absolute disqualification for initiation. The annals of the Order never yet have furnished, or could furnish, an instance in which an avowed atheist was ever made a Mason. The very initiatory ceremonies of the first degree forbid and prevent the possibility of so monstrous an occurrence."

Under this requirement believers in the Israelitish faith, those in the religion of Christ, those in that of Mahomet, and we may further say those of Confucius, all these and more, have a right to the advantages of Freemasonry. And if it be true, each has a right, as a Mason, to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience; and that he may do so, he is bound to bring the institution of Freemasonry in accordance therewith: so that it shall not, in any way, interfere with that higher allegiance he owes to God. All Grand Lodges attempting to circumscribe, much more to forbid these masonic rights and privileges to Masons, in instituting Lodges in accordance with the religion taught in the Landmarks, to that extent interferes with man's duty to his Creator, and must therefore prove destructive to the religious developement of its members. The Grand Lodges of this country have so enacted by their exclusive jurisdictional practice, thus placing themselves not only in opposition to the ancient established practice of the Order, but in opposition to the letter and spirit of the Constitution of the United States, which secures to the citizens freedom in matters of religion. The evidence of this fact is found in the workings of this exclusive system in Massachusetts. As an instance of the Israelitish brethren and the Christians being forced alike to dedicate their Lodges to God "*and to the memory of Holy Sts. John,*" we quote from Mackey the following ritualistic Landmark. It is a Landmark, that a "BOOK OF THE LAW" shall constitute an indispensable part of the furniture of every Lodge. I say advisedly, *a Book of the Law*, because it is not absolutely required that every where the old and new Testament shall be used. The "Book of the Law" is that volume which, by the religion of the country, is believed to contain the revealed will of the Grand Architect of the Universe. Hence, in all Lodges in Christian countries, the Book of the Law is composed of the Old and New Testaments; in a country where Judaism was the prevailing faith,

the Old Testament alone would be sufficient ; and in Mohammedan countries, and among Mohammedan Masons, the Koran might be substituted. Masonry does not attempt to interfere with the peculiar religious faith of its disciples, except so far as relates to the belief in the existence of God, and what necessarily results from that belief. The Book of the Law is to the Speculative Mason his spiritual Trestle Board ; without this he cannot labor. Whatever he believes to be the revealed will of the Grand Architect constitutes for him this spiritual Trestle Board, and must ever be before him in his hours of speculative labor, to be the rule and guide of his conduct. The Landmark, therefore, requires that a Book of the Law, a religious code of some kind, purporting to be an exemplar of the revealed will of God, shall form an essential part of the furniture of every Lodge.

Thus dedicated in conformity with the above Landmark the Holy Bible must always rest upon the pedestal classed and recognized as the great light in Freemasonry, in which appears the name of Jesus the King of the Jews. This bible as it is, is claimed and recognized as the Christian's guide ; while, on the other hand, we are informed [in our masonic ceremonies] that our Israelitish Brethren, in their masonic ceremonies, dedicate their Lodges to King Solomon. Here arises a religious incompatibility by these heterogeneous and antagonistic elements thus brought in contact, each impeding the progress of the other.

This is so plain that none acquainted therewith can fail to recognize it, for he who, in these days attempts, within the Lodges in or about Boston, (even if it be in the solemn attitude of prayer) to allude to the name of the Master of St John the Evangelist or St. John the Baptist — Jesus of Nazareth — is likely to be requested at the earliest convenience to so shape his prayer as not to give offence. This fact none, in truth, dare deny nor are they permitted, nor would it be possible, without doing injustice to the feelings of others, otherwise to

act, since they have no right under this exclusive practice which forbids any but christians to institute Lodges within this Commonwealth. It was not so with the Grand Lodge of England in the year 1754; at that time there were no divisions drawn out upon the world's map of Freemasonry, as will be seen from the following: In 1754 when our Jewish Brethren made complaint of this practice of the use of the name of Jesus in their Lodge prayers at London, the English Grand Lodge did, and could afford to institute a form of prayer containing the objectionable name, for this reason, if our Jewish Brethren did not like such proceedings there was no law in practice forbidding them to institute Lodges wherein this name would not appear. Not so however, in this country, under our exclusive practice. We here cite the prayer by them instituted: * "Most Holy and Glorious Lord God, thou Architect of Heaven and earth, who art the giver of all good gifts and graces! and hath promised that where two or three are gathered together in thy name, thou will be in the midst of them, in thy name we assemble and meet together, most humbly beseeching thee to bless us in all our undertakings: to give us thy Holy Spirit, to enlighten our minds with wisdom and understanding; that we may know and serve thee aright, that all our doings may tend to thy glory and the salvation of our souls. And we beseech thee, O Lord God, to bless this our present undertaking and to grant that this our Brother may dedicate his life to thy service, and be a true and faithful brother amongst us. Endue him with Divine wisdom, that he may, with the secrets of Masonry, be able to unfold the mysteries of godliness and, Christianity. This we humbly beg in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen!"

The Grand Lodges of that age held, and exercised concurrent jurisdiction, from the rising to the setting of the sun; so that the Israelite, the Christian, the Mahomedan with his Koran, and the disciples of Confucius, could establish their

Lodges and exercise masonic jurisdiction wherever it seemed best to them; and, thus free to act, each worshipped God, according to the dictates of his own conscience. But, within the limits of the United States, and under the masonic jurisprudence now in practice, none are allowed to establish, or exercise the rites of Freemasonry as organized Lodges, except those who have received Charters from the Grand Lodges of such states, and they all, we believe, recognize and enjoin the use of the Bible, and acknowledge its teachings as binding upon all Masons who work under the authority of such Charters, and will allow no Lodge to be opened as such without the Bible, thus by force bringing in contact the believer and the disbeliever in the Christian religion. The result of such regulations is, as we have stated, the requiring Chaplains not to use in their prayers, the name of Jesus, and thereby strangling to death what little of Christianity there may have been in their organizations.

Now, for what reasons was this gallows erected upon which they have strangled their Christianity? We think it was to strangle to death the Masonry conferred upon our fathers by the English Army Lodges, in 1775.

Why do we thus believe? It is for the following reasons:—

1. Because Boston was the first place in the United States, where colored men were made Masons and organized into a Lodge. Being so organized, they petitioned the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts for a Charter; this they continued to do until 1783, in which year, the question of the rights of the negro occupied the attention of the people of this Commonwealth, it being the year in which slavery was abolished in Massachusetts.

2. It was in Massachusetts only, and that too, while the Massachusetts Grand Lodge refused to grant the petition of the blacks then before her, on the one hand, that she, on the other, introduced this State jurisdictional practice.

The refusal of our father's petition and the introduction of this State jurisdictional practice were vainly determined upon in order to prevent them from exercising or enjoying the benefits of Freemasonry. But, vain is the arm of flesh to resist the decrees of heaven. Notwithstanding this action, many have enjoyed the benefits of our earthly Lodge and have gone up to the celestial Grand Lodge, where, in unison with myriads of angelic beings, they worship the Great Architect of the Universe !

We feel assured that many articles which have appeared from the pen of masonic writers who were, at the time, in the interest of Masonry, catering to the existing prejudices of the epoch in which they wrote, will now, alas, prove the frailty of man no matter in what garb he may be dressed.

“ *Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis* ” — but our opponents after quoting this ancient saying have signally failed to abide by its teachings, for, surely times have changed and they have not changed with them as the paragraph following the above quotation shows : — “ If it be true that the Almighty never made a slave, and that slavery is a condition into which the child enters after birth, then it follows that his restoration to freedom restores him to all his natural rights. The earliest regulation (1723) we have upon the subject declares that a candidate for Masonry must be “ *free born.* ” This was soon afterwards (1738) explained by the addition of the words “ *or no bondman.* ”

The Grand Lodge of England, adopting this interpretation provides, by constitutional law, that the candidate *must* be a “ freeman. ” The rule in this country is, “ that the mother must have been free at the time of the birth. ” This would, of course, exclude all the negroes of the South who were born in slavery ; and this fact should quiet the nerves of our brethren of the North Carolina committee against having their sensibilities disturbed by being required to take their former slaves into their embraces as brethren, should there

ever arise such a preposterous movement as that they so credulously attribute to the Grand Lodge of New York."

We repeat that the times have changed but American Lodges have not changed with them. England is ready to recognize, and has recognized the truth contained in the Declaration of Independence—that all men are created equal—and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and has made her Masonic Institutions to conform therewith, in as much as she has altered her Masonic Constitutions as is above stated in the article quoted from the words "free born" to that of "free man," showing thereby that as times have changed so has she, proving that she is cognizant of the true import of the words that "of one blood God created all nations of men to dwell upon the face of the whole earth," and again, "that ye are all brethren." We here cite from the late Rev. George Oliver, D.D., her action in this respect:—

"A *freeman*. — According to the customs and regulations of our ancient brethren, every candidate was formerly required to be 'a freeman, born of a freewoman.' This formula was originally considered to be an unchangeable landmark; but on the extinction of negro slavery by the British Parliament, the following arguments were used at a Grand Lodge, holden Sept. 1, 1847, in favor of its alteration. The Grand Master requested the brethren to consider the propriety of remodelling the form by which a candidate for initiation declares himself to be *freeborn*. 'There are,' he said, 'at the present moment, many men in Jamaica and other places who are free by the law of emancipation; and yet their mothers have been slaves, they cannot conscientiously sign such a declaration, knowing it to be untrue; and in the absence of that preliminary act, we cannot initiate them. I should be glad to see it altered, and therefore move that in future we substitute the words *free agent* for *freeborn*, and

the declaration be thus revised.' After a friendly conversation, which lasted some time, it was unanimously resolved, that the phrase in future should be 'freeman,' and that the words 'free by birth' should be cancelled."

While the writer of the above article admits that the child is free at birth, and virtually that *all men are born free*, and that before you can enslave you must kidnap, nevertheless, they, of the American Masonic Institutions are ready to recognize the validity of such kidnapping, notwithstanding the penalty pronounced by God against the crime: "He that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death." And further, they make it one of their unalterable landmarks, because, as is said, it was established by our English brethren in 1723. This is true, and is sustained in the following language: "The rule in this country is, that the mother must have been free at the time of the birth," meaning thereby that without the freedom of the kidnapped mother, the child was ineligible to the degrees of Masonry. Be it said, however, to the credit of our English brethren who created the obnoxious rule to which our democratic brethren of America so persistently cling, that by their act of abolishing it, they have thus declared it to belong to the barbarous past, and to form no part of the masonic system of the present age, and now they accept a brother for his merit alone. In so doing they are keeping pace with the times as they have changed.

Now let us see how these masonic disciples, dressed in the emblem of purity, propose to apply, and carry into actual practice, the love lessons, — for here is an attempt to deceive the very elect themselves. The Committee on Foreign Correspondence of the Grand Lodge of New York, speaking of the Grand Lodge of Hamburgh, indulges in the following expressions: "The object of Masonry is to cultivate peace, harmony, and fraternity among the families of mankind; it has none of the attributes of war, and desires not the aid of,

and cannot employ any of its agencies, to enforce its decrees. Its great mission is peace, its chief employment of warfare is love, and its influence among the families of men is to draw them together, and make them one brotherhood.

"It looks for its maintenance, and the enforcement of its laws and decrees, to the obligations which its votaries have assumed, and the high moral tone which its ritual inculcates. Its genial and fraternizing influences extend to the remotest boundaries of civilization."

"All continents, all civilizations, and even the islands of the sea, are peopled with its votaries. Like the extended possessions of a colossal empire, the great luminary of day does not cease to shine on its altars. It forms a golden arch which encircles human society, and its keystone is composed of the moral jewel which was repeated in the accents of Divinity, among the lessons that were taught from the Mount of Olives eighteen hundred years ago: 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them.'"

Now, brethren, mark what follows: "Any masonic government that deliberately or voluntarily removes this keystone, in its relations with other Jurisdictions, deserves the reprehensions of universal Masonry, because it thereby destroys the general harmony, and introduces confusion and disorder in place of union and concord. But this keystone has been removed; this great maxim of masonic faith has been violated, prostrated, and destroyed, in the action of the Grand Lodge of Hamburgh."

Truly, the most charitable comment in which we can permit ourselves to indulge, in respect to this flagrant inconsistency, is to look upon it as an airy flight of fancies. Their faith being without work is dead, for naught but a living faith can unite with God, our Eternal Head. Now, we shall see what works they propose to do commensurate with charity, one of the cardinal virtues of Freemasonry. Before touching their works we give the following:—

"The distinguishing characteristics of Masons is charity, and prominent among the first lessons to be practised we find: "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'"

This differs but little from the same lessons taught by our Hebrew brothers, which shows the antiquity of these virtues, and are set forth by an historian as follows: —

"Among the ancient Jews, the seven works of charity were said to be, —

- "1st. Giving bread to the hungry.
- "2nd. Giving drink to the thirsty.
- "3rd. Giving clothes to the naked.
- "4th. Giving lodging to the stranger.
- "5th. Visiting the sick.
- "6th. Visiting the prisoner.
- "7th. Burying the dead."

Then how appropriately is this strong language used by the apostle, when speaking of the same virtue, —

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind. Charity envieth not. Charity vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but re-

joiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

We would ask if the following Report is based upon this cardinal virtue, as above described :—

"It has not withdrawn or offered to withdraw the Charters of its illegitimate subordinates. Though apprised of the universal sentiment which prevails among the Grand Lodges of the United States in condemnation of its acts, it persists in keeping up these Lodges in the Jurisdiction of New York, in violation of our laws and in defiance of our authority. This is not all. It is indeed, but a tithe of her offending. It is a venial, and excusable offence in comparison to a much greater *which she is seeking now to perpetuate. Because we have declared her two subordinates irregular, and suspended intercourse with her till their Charters are recalled, she has invented a means of reprisal, a mode of retaliation, which for deliberate revenge has no parallel in the history of Masonry.* There are certain bodies of colored men, Africans, in the States of the American Union, at the South as well as in the North, whose members claim to have got hold of some of the secrets, and profess to practice the rites of Masonry. They have no legitimate claims, and with an individual exception, as we believe, make no pretence to legitimate descent or authority from regular Grand Lodges. Many of these in the Southern States, as we are informed, are slaves, all are blacks and mulattoes. They have no connection with, because they are not recognized by the Masons of this country. They are, as stated, mostly slaves, and the descendants of slaves, between whom and the whites there is irreconcilable and irradicable repugnance to social equality. A persistent attempt to enforce this equality would be very likely to result in the destruction of Masonry in the United States, or a war of races, ending in the extermination of the negro race. Strange and unaccountable as it appears, it seems that the Grand Lodge of

Hamburgh contemplates this state of things with composure and complacency. She is not only to recognize these bodies herself as regular and legitimate Lodges and Grand Lodges, but she is trying to persuade the other Grand Lodges of Europe to do the same thing. The following quotation from the proceedings of that Body, of May 6, 1868, will prove the scope of her designs, viz. : 'The Grand Lodge of Hamburgh will, at its next Convention, make this question the topic of deliberation, relying thereby upon the support of its sister Lodges, desiring them to communicate their views and intentions in respect to the organization of the Grand Lodge of the Republic of Liberia, in Africa; but, *in particular, in respect to the Lodges and Grand Lodges of colored people*, pronounced by the American Grand Lodges to be clandestine.' In another part of the Hamburgh proceedings, they refer to independent Lodges of colored people (negroes, mulattoes, &c.), in Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, New Jersey, Maryland, &c., which are united under the jurisdiction of a National Grand Lodge in America. 'We know little of them,' says Hamburgh, 'because they are declared by the North American Grand Lodges as clandestine, and all masonic intercourse is strictly forbidden.'

"There can be, therefore, no possible misapprehension as to *who* and *what* Hamburgh seeks to recognize as regular and legitimate Masons and masonic bodies. 'In reference to the individuals composing these bodies it is proper to say, that their social *status*, both in the Northern and Southern States of the Union, *ex necessitate rei*, is inferior to that of the whites, and their political privileges are limited. We will not stop to argue the policy or impolicy, the justice or injustice of this state of things. We take the facts as they are, and American society as it is, and apply to them the rules of masonic law. Among these rules, landmarks as they are called, are the following, viz. : —

1st. The men made Masons must be freeborn, or no bondmen, of mature age and of good report, &c. Again he asks: "Are the persons of color in the United States who claim to be Masons, *freeborn*?" "Slavery originally existed in nearly all of the States of the American Union — in every one of them, we believe, except one." Hence it will be perceived, that nearly all of African blood in the United States are either slaves or the descendants of slaves, and, as such, are ineligible to the degrees of Masonry under the masonic landmark first quoted; but if this landmark were ignored or disregarded, there are other obstacles equally insuperable to their recognition. "Could we persuade ourselves it were necessary to argue the question of their moral and mental disabilities, or to present their inferior *social status* in American society, as furnishing evidences of their ineligibility to masonic privileges, equality and honors, we should arrive at the same conclusion — an entire disruption and overturning of American society, could alone induce a recognition of the rights of the African race to masonic equality and privileges; but we do not intend to discuss these questions."

How does this compare with the lessons of charity we have cited? Is this spirit here manifest, in keeping with the teachings of Freemasonry? Without further comment on the distorted representation of the Committee, we reply in the negative.

The fact of the descendants of slaves being eligible to masonic privileges is known to every intelligent Mason, the disqualifying clause in the jurisprudence having been repealed by those who first established it, viz., the Grand Lodge of England. And we deny, upon the authority claimed by Masons, that this so called landmark ever was, or could have been one established in the original masonic system, as this language proves, — "And God spake these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."

Who can doubt that this was addressed to Masons? Do we not find in "Oliver's Antiquities of Masonry," that the rites of this royal art were practised when the Hebrew Lawgiver was leading the former slaves of Egyptian bondage towards the Land of Promise? He says, that "In obedience to the mandate of Moses, the Masters of all the newly formed Lodges, the Principal of the Chapter, the Princes of the Tribes, with other Masons, assembled to receive the instructions of their Grand Master. To this Grand Lodge, Moses gave wise charges. He told them that it was the will and pleasure of Almighty God that a tabernacle should be erected in the midst of their camp, which He had promised to make his temporary residence on earth."

We next take, by way of illustration, the history of Jephthah, in whose time, according to Oliver, "a masonic *test* was instituted which remains in full force to this day, and will, to the end of time. Jephthah was the natural son of Gilead. We are told that though he had distinguished himself for valor and military conduct, even beyond his years, which caused his father to esteem him more than all his other children; the jealousy and hatred of these in the end drove him from his father's house. Aleliacab, one of his sons, stung with envy for his father's partiality for the son of a concubine, bribed an Ammonitish chief to murder Gilead, that his brethren might, with greater security, execute their vengeance upon Jephthah. The attempt succeeded, but not unavenged, for Jephthah slew the Ammonite after he had perpetrated the deed. When Gilead was dead, the brethren expelled Jephthah from their presence, contending that, as the son of a bondwoman, he had no right of inheritance to the possessions of the freeborn. Jephthah, destitute of every means of subsistence, collected a band of adventurers, who lived by the forced contributions of the neighboring countries."

Here we find the son of a slave woman establishing the

Key to our Lodge's door, without which none, to this day, can gain admission.

The Committee did well in not resting their case on that already refuted argument, that none but the freeborn are entitled to masonic privileges, while the fact is patent to every Mason, that by the aid of the son of a bondwoman, we are permitted to-day as Masons to enter our Lodges. Their evasions are perceptible, for, had they rested their case on that proposition, their language would necessarily have led to the discussion of the slave-trade, and New York having borne such a conspicuous part in that traffic, and having more capital invested and more ships for the purpose than any other city in the world at the time of this writing, these masonic brothers may have contributed their share, hence their eagerness, doubtless, to waive the question! There is no reason to doubt that they had no capital invested. Did they offer one word of rebuke to those engaged in the slave traffic? This article, on the contrary, is more of a defence, we are justified in saying, as it is written, — "*He that is not for me is against me.*" Thus it will be perceived that they have rendered their Report simply as a defence of these wrong-doers. How inappropriate, leading to confusion, is the use by them of this beautiful text, that, — "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them."

This is acknowledged as the true masonic maxim even by them, while seeking to pervert it; in order to justify their unholy purposes. These gentlemen of the Committee have done well, in thus reporting, for if we are to judge a tree by its fruit, and that organization by its Report, we would say, to the Supreme Architect alone is known how many of the Masonic Fraternity stand in His sight *particeps criminis* with Gordon, who was hung in their midst during the rebellion for that piracy — the slave-trade! Their sagacity is commendable. What are they but wolves in sheep's cloth-

ing? Let them divest themselves of their white dresses, their aprons, and their gloves, and be invested in their proper apparel, as the enemies of every principle of humanity known to the masonic system. They say, "*intellectually and morally we are ineligible to masonic privileges.*" Future historians will bear us out when we assert, that, with every impediment placed in the march of our progress by such anti-masonic spirits whence emanated that unchristian-like article, our record of morality, in proportion to the disadvantages which we encounter on every hand, heightens in comparison with our more favored white brothers.

But, as we belong to the "*ineligible and degraded race,*" perhaps we are incompetent to judge of what is meant or understood by the words *virtue* or *Masonry*, which *originally* were synonymous; but will enquire if there exists no test by which to judge the standard of morality?

If morality consists in contributing a greater number to the prisons and state-prisons than our white fellow-countrymen, then we submit, that of all the inhabitants of New York we are the most immoral and degraded. The statistics of the city of New York for 1863-'64, are not without weight in this respect, and, as an evidence of their superior claim to morality, we submit what we have taken from the "New York Prison Reports," upon which we presume is established their claim. Thus, of the number of prisoners in county prisons, —

Whites,	537	Blacks,	31
Blackwell's Island,	837	"	82
City Prison, New York City, 20,492		"	658

These figures mean something—learn who will. Again, we ask, was it to restrain the degraded blacks that Maj. Gen. Butler was sent by the Government to New York City, when the dwellings of her peaceful citizens were being

pillaged, the sick taken from their beds and hung at the corners of the streets, the victims exclaiming in their death agonies, in accents not unlike the antique martyrs to Christianity, — “You may kill the body, but you cannot hurt the soul.” Then, again, is recorded the more inhuman deed, which finds no parallel in the annals of crime, except in some barbaric warfare, — that of firing the Asylum to which the homeless and friendless orphan, directed by the Great Parent God, were accustomed to turn for shelter and protection! Not content with this, but full of satanic hate, the little orphans, as they fled terror-stricken from the burning roof, were murdered!

Are these, we would ask, evidences of their higher civilization? As well might these red-handed miscreants have pronounced, with uplifted hands yet dripping with innocent blood, this sacred injunction: “All things ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so them!”

As for these masonic brothers, — members of the New York Committee on Foreign Correspondence, — we repeat, it would have been as appropriate for one, as for the other; for were not those rioters carrying out the lessons taught by them in their Report (which is rather an incentive than a prediction, as is so understood when proclaimed from the rostrum or by the press), that “a persistent attempt to enforce this equality, would be very likely to result in the destruction of Masonry in the United States, or in a war of races, ending in the extermination of the negro race!”

We are to understand by the above, that “a war of races” is imminent, and by whom predicted? — By the Committee of Masons on Foreign Correspondence! Who are to be its victims? Of this they have left us without a doubt, for they tell the Grand Lodge at Hamburgh, “that to persist in the attempt to enforce this equality of the blacks and mulattoes with the whites, would be likely to result in the extermination of the negro race!” We put this query to the

Committee: Who are to be the perpetrators of this crime? Who are to engage in this warfare? Surely, Masons cannot engage in this work of wholesale slaughter and blood, while making claim to such glorious principles as they profess. So in their dress they represent the lamb, emblem of purity and peace which they dare not defile, as would be the case should they engage to fulfil their prediction of waging war upon brethren guilty of no crime but that of having a skin not colored like their own. Indeed, how could they even dream of such a possibility, in view of such masonic lessons as the following: "Masons, as one of their first principles, profess innocence, — they put on white apparel, as an emblem of that character, which bespeaks purity of soul, guiltlessness, and being harmless." We have the following passage in the "*Biographia Ecclesiastica*": "The ancients were also wont to put a white garment on the person baptized, to denote his having put off the lusts of the flesh, and being cleansed from his former sins, and that he had obliged himself to maintain a life of unspotted innocence. Accordingly the baptized are both by the Apostolic and the Greek Fathers frequently styled the Enlightened, because they professed to be children of light, and engaged themselves never to return again to the work of darkness. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. This white garment used to be delivered to them with the solemn charge: 'Receive the white and undefiled garment, and produce it without spot, before the tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you may obtain eternal life. Amen.' They were wont to wear these white garments for the space of a week after they were baptized, and then put them off and lay them up in the church, that they might be kept as a witness against them, if they should violate the baptismal covenant. Whilst the apron with which we are clothed, indicates a disposition

of innocence, and belies not the wearer's heart, let the ignorant deride and scoff on, superior to the ridicule and malice of the wicked, we will enfold ourselves in the garb of our own virtue, and safe in self-approving conscience, stand unmoved amid the persecutions of adversity. The raiment which truly implies the innocence of the heart, is a badge more honorable than ever was devised by kings. The Roman Eagle, with all the orders of knighthood, is inferior. They may be prostituted by the caprice of princes, but innocence is innate, and cannot be adopted. To be a true Mason, is to possess this principle, or the apparel which he wears is an infamy to the apostate, and only shows him forth to infamy and contempt."

Such is the character belonging to Masons as Masons, and he who falls short of these precepts in his life and character, as a Mason, to that extent fails to live up to the required principles of the Order. Therefore we say that Masons cannot engage in this predicted war of races. My brethren, let us lay this lesson deep in our hearts, and endeavor to practise its precepts; leaving our white brethren to scoff on in their wicked malice. If we are only permitted to enfold ourselves in the garb of our own virtue, and are safe in a self-approving conscience, in consequence of our having loved our enemies and prayed for them while they have thus maligned our characters to the nations of the earth, we shall have done well.

Now as to the war of races. In spite of the above quotations, we have reasons for apprehension, seeing that the Committee have lent themselves to the support, if not to the protection, of Andrew Johnson; and have shown their readiness to grant him aid and comfort since the murder of our great emancipator, Abraham Lincoln, the accessories to which murder are not yet all known.

We say that since that event, and since his (Johnson's) prediction of a war of races, the Masonic Fraternity has

made a specialty of his name and presence. Witness their action in Baltimore, where they placed him upon an eminence while that extensive masonic procession was passing before him uncovered, to do him honor. Witness his invitation by the Masons of Massachusetts to Boston, and a masonic procession got up, hitherto unequalled in this country, on which occasion they forced the Grand Master of Massachusetts, to stand in a barouche drawn by four horses, in which sat the *august* (?) Andrew Johnson, and over whom the said Grand Master had to hold an umbrella during the live-long day! All this was done to honor the man whose prediction of a war of races had so eminently qualified him for such honor! In view of these facts they may engage in the fulfilment of this predicted war of races; and we have imagined to ourselves its occurrence. This war of races is not to take place until the blacks and mulattoes shall have given sufficient evidence of their advancement towards equality, which is to be seen in their manly, upright, moral, and virtuous conduct, in the fulfilment of all the duties devolving upon men. That they are now fast advancing can be seen. If you go to the South, you will find them engaged in all the varied mechanical arts and employments, as well as in the humane support and protection of society, acting as firemen, seamen, police-officers, teachers, legislators, and, in one instance, lieutenant-governor. The latter bears evidence of the fact of their being fully in possession of the franchise; while in Boston, lawyers of our race are found pleading at the bar; and we have physicians among us who are found in the practice of that still more humane art that relieves the ills of suffering humanity. All this and more is now witnessed, and the war of races must certainly be near at hand! We say we have depicted to ourselves such a war of races — we have looked into the courts, and seen neglected masonic widows (white) and the Deputy Grand Master of our Grand

Lodge, with all the skill of twenty years' experience, and with a heart fully in sympathy with the widowed, contending for that equal justice due to one in her situation. We pass from these and find a strange brother, also neglected by his own white brothers, prostrated with fever, whose parched lips bespeak his sufferings; there we find a Past Grand Master of this Grand Lodge administering successfully to his relief, in his acknowledged capacity as a doctor, whose medical science was acquired in this country and in Europe. We pass on, and by the way-side we meet with emaciated countenances bespeaking diseases that have baffled the skill of the regular practicing physicians, enquiring for another one of the Past Grand Masters of this Grand Lodge, — Br. Samuel T. Birmingham, — whose fame has spread far and wide, not only for his known skill in effecting the relief thus sought, but for his acts of charity and deeds of benevolence, of which this Lodge-room attests. Again we look abroad, and see the mulattoes filling our pulpits in common with their darker skin brothers, each and all endeavoring to push forward the car of humanity. While this is going on a few convicts from the State-prison joined by others of a similar class, are holding a meeting to take into consideration the progress thus being made by the blacks and mulattoes, and indignantly cry out against this equality, and firmly resolve to commence carrying out the prediction, or advice, given by the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, and reiterated by Andrew Johnson, President of the United States! Thus sustained, and led by their Governor, who claimed them as his "friends," they proceeded to their work of devastation and death. Meanwhile, the Grand Lodge of New York is in session, messengers are hastily despatched to inform that Most Worshipful Body that the war of races predicted by them has already commenced. Instantly do they leave the Lodge to engage in the contest, and, in their

haste, fail to divest themselves of their aprons, each armed with the weapon familiarly known as the "Arkansas tooth-pick" — the bowie-knife — and as they proceed in haste to the scene of strife, a mulatto, fleeing for life from the ravages of the released State's prison friends, providentially discovers men attired in white aprons, and being himself a Mason, and knowing the apron to be an emblem of innocence, confidingly approaches, trusting in that ægis of protection, but is met with the words, "WAR OF RACES," followed by thrusts of the weapon in hand — the bowie-knife! After it has done its fatal work, the brothers's life-blood is wiped upon that apron which drew him instinctively to his murderer. Oh, infamy and shame! will you not cover with your mantle these progenitors of wrong in this age of civilization, that posterity may see their deeds and beware! Who was the father of the mulatto killed? He was not black. May it not have been that a father has murdered his own son? For what? For the humane and manly acts, shown above, — for no other reason than that of discharging the duties the son owed to God, his neighbor, and himself! Oh, ye Masons, attire yourselves in the emblems of purity and innocence, and go forth to proclaim to the nations of the earth that a faithful discharge on our part of the common duties of humanity subjects us to such a fate!! And then, raising your wicked hands to heaven, say, — "*Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them.*" This is your quotation in view of such horrors!

We here state that this Committee, unwilling to confine their seeming unconquerable hate of the negro race to this hemisphere, propose to enjoin it upon their brethren of another, and, with confidence in their asseverations, proclaim the extinction of a race without whose aid their governmental existence would have been annihilated by the villainous attempt of treason!

In opposition to such spirits we take our stand, and while

life and manhood last we will continue to resist oppression, come from whatever quarter it may, — whether dressed in the habiliments of Masonry or that of chattel slavery, prompted by the avarice of men who have thus wronged us, — we shall continue to expose their wrong doing, and thus proclaim, —

“ Still let the land be shaken
 By a summons of thine own !
 By all save truth forsaken,
 Why, stand with that alone !
 Shrink not from strife unequal !
 With the best is always hope ;
 And ever in the sequel
 God holds the right side up !

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX I.

REPORT OF THE GRAND LODGE OF HAMBURGH.

Among the things to be forever preserved and remembered by us with gratitude, is this brotherly greeting offered us by the Grand Lodge of Hamburgh, which was made in our behalf when the clouds of prejudice, sustained by American slavery, hung more heavily than at any other time, as it then seemed to all human discernment, that the enslavement of our race was to be perpetual. Since which time however, our enthrallment has ceased, our liberties restored, and we are now placed in a position to greet and return thanks to our friends for services rendered in the hours of passion and disparagement. In the name of our race we tender to Hamburgh our appreciative gratitude. We extract from the Freemason's Magazine, Vol. 19, page 34, never having before seen the entire report : —

“ The Grand Lodge of Hamburgh, beg leave to submit to the consideration of those sister Grand Lodges in Europe, more intimately connected with a matter of general importance, requesting them to report their opinion what action in relation thereto, might be necessary to be taken, and which at the same time might be calculated to meet the approbation of a majority of them. There exists in some of the States of North America, besides the Lodges of Hayti, many independent Lodges of colored people, (negroes, mullattoes, &c.) as, for instance, in Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, New Jersey, Maryland, &c. They are united under Grand Lodges under the jurisdiction of a

National Grand Lodge of America. We know little about them, because they are declared by the North American Grand Lodges as clandestine Lodges, and all masonic intercourse with them is strictly forbidden. Their origin is unknown. The African Lodge at Boston, insists upon having obtained its charter from the Grand Lodge of England; this is, however, doubtful. According to an assertion of some of our German brethren, who have, free from prejudice, visited negro Lodges in New York, they could find nothing tending to prevent them from pronouncing these Lodges just and perfect. In North America, however, in the land of boasted liberty, a negro or mullatto, in short, any person in whose veins a single drop of colored blood runs, — be he twice as righteous, honest, well educated, talented and scientific, is considered an outcast, and all intercourse with such person is regarded as a disgrace. The prejudice against colored people, even in those States not counted as slave States, and where none but free negroes live, as for instance in the State of New York, is of such a nature, that no white person would sit down with a negro at the same table, or travel with one in the same stage. That even our American brethren are not free from this prejudice, is a fact well known and deeply to be regretted. In the transactions of the Grand Lodge of New York (Williard), for 1855, the question whether colored persons could be admitted as Masons, was regarded as a monstrous proposition, and unworthy of discussion.

At the Masonic Convention, in Paris, in 1855, Br. Cummings, representative of Washington, insinuated that the European Lodges, in consideration of the condition in America, might be induced not to admit negroes; this insinuation was, however, rejected. Under these prejudicial circumstances on the part of the North American Grand Lodges, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that colored Lodges and colored Grand Lodges never will be recognized by them. But are the Grand Lodges of Europe, where such prejudices are unknown, thereby bound to deny the legitimacy of a great number of otherwise just and lawful Lodges, and to refuse their brethren admittance into our Lodges because they are of a darker color? The fact that a Grand Lodge of a negro State — that of Hayti, with its subordinates —

has been recognized by most of the European Grand Lodges, as a legal Grand Lodge, and that its representative at the Masonic Convention at Paris has been accredited, and furthermore and in particular, the fact that this Grand Lodge is enumerated as such on the list of Prussian Grand Lodges, is sufficient proof that such a prejudice has no existence in European Grand Lodges. The Grand Lodge of another negro State, that of the Republic of Liberia, in Africa, although too young yet and too little known, may, in the course of time, rely upon being recognized by the European Grand Lodge as well as that of Hayti. As to the Grand Lodges and their Subordinates of colored people, the North American Grand Lodges might appeal to a monopoly, according to which only one Grand Lodge can legally exist in one and the same State; and no Lodge can legally exist in such State without the sanction of the Grand Lodge thereof. This monopoly has been created by common consent, and is not founded, as, for instance, in Prussia, on a demand of the government. The Grand Lodge of Hamburgh, in consequence of having been regardless of this monopoly, as far as it concerns German Lodges, came in conflict with them. On this ground the right of discussing the propriety of such monopoly might to the Grand Lodge of Hamburgh be denied; but here it must be premised that this action of the Grand Lodge of Hamburgh has only reference to such Lodges, which, if they had been disposed to join the Grand Lodge of the State, would undoubtedly, have been rejected by the same on the supposition that the members of such Lodges were unfit for reception. When American Lodges, in respect to a general prejudice prevailing there, deem it proper to reject colored persons; when they refuse members of colored Lodges admittance, forbidding at the same time all masonic intercourse with them, they may, politically, be in the right, but not masonically, and cannot expect European Lodges to agree with them on this point. The connection of Europe with other parts of the world, increasing from year to year, demands a discussion of this question, which ere long, may be submitted to the consideration of each European Lodge, in particular to Lodges in seaports and in Germany, but to the Lodges at Hamburgh. The Grand Lodge at Hamburgh will, at its next Convention, make this question the

topic of deliberation, relying thereby upon the support of its sister Grand Lodges, desiring them to communicate their views and intentions, in respect to the recognition of the Grand Lodge of the Republic of Liberia, in Africa, but *in particular in respect to the Lodges and Grand Lodges of colored people, pronounced by the American Grand Lodges to be clandestine.*"

APPENDIX II.

ORIGIN OF AMERICAN MASONIC NEGRO LODGES.

Since this address was prepared we were favored, through the kindness of a brother, with a copy of the April number of the "American Freemason," and though we regret that we had not the pleasure of seeing the invaluable production before, yet we feel thankful for the article entitled "Origin of American Negro Masonic Lodges," which we take the liberty of affixing to this document as an appendix.

BRETHREN, — We take pleasure in commending to your consideration a constant perusal of the "American Freemason," as it is, in our opinion, the only journal which honestly and conscientiously vindicates the right; of which the following article is a specimen : —

The following paragraph we copy from the "Report of Foreign Correspondence," rendered to the Grand Lodge of Maryland, by Br. William J. Wroth, Committee, and which appears in the proceedings of that Body for 1867 :—

"In 1784, certain colored persons residing in Boston petitioned the Grand Master of England for a Charter. The Charter, dated Sept. 29, 1784, was granted to Prince Hall, Boston Smith, Thomas Sanderson, and several others — all colored men—under the name of African Lodge, No. 459. The Charter, however, was not received in Boston until the year 1787. It was an ordinary Charter, in the usual form, and conferred no

other privileges than those usually granted by such instruments. Of its proceedings from this time until 1827, we have no definite information ; at which time we find it actively at work, under the Mastership of Mr. John T. Hilton, claiming the powers and prerogatives of a Grand Lodge, under the name of Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Ancient York Masons, which powers it must have assumed as early as 1812, in which year it is said to have granted a Charter for Boyer Lodge, No. 1 (colored), in the city of New York. It was stricken from the registry of the Grand Lodge of England in 1813, and its lawful existence was then of course terminated, had it ever been anything other than an irregular organization. On surrendering the Charter, *which was never returned to it*, a copy was kept, and, after the Lodge had been dormant for several years, it was revived *with this copy* by the persons who were in possession of it. Its original establishment in Boston was a violation of the jurisdictional rights of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, which was organized in 1733, fifty-one years before the Charter for this colored Lodge was granted by the Grand Lodge of England, and, therefore, waiving the question of color, it could never have been recognized by that or any other masonic body as a lawful Lodge."

This is a most succinct historical sketch, as it is, we doubt not, the most truthful one, of this matter of the origin of negro Lodges of Freemasons in America which we have seen in print. To Brother Wroth, it is evident, as it is, from the reading of the above, to a majority of the Freemasons in the United States, that those Lodges of black men, or "colored," are clandestine, illegal, and irregular, and, as such, should not be recognized in any manner by the white Freemasons of this or any other country. But has not Brother Wroth's zeal to establish this fact overstepped itself, and induced him to jump at this conclusion? Let us examine the matter—not quite so hastily as Brother Wroth does, but a little more calmly, and, as grave questions should be, without prejudice.

By the account rendered by Brother Wroth we find that a Warrant was granted by the Grand Master of a Grand Lodge in England to certain black men to organize a Masonic Lodge in Boston,

Massachusetts, to be named African Lodge, No. 459, of the register of Lodges created by authority of this Grand Lodge; and that said Charter or Warrant was dated 29th of Sept., 1784. We say “a Grand Lodge in England,” and not the Grand Lodge of England, because it will be remembered that there were, in 1784, and for nearly thirty years before, and as many afterward, two Grand Lodges in England; and which of them it was whose Grand Master granted this Charter is not stated*; nor is it important to the subject, as both, at that time, were recognized as legitimate masonic powers throughout the world. Suffice to say that a Grand Master in England did grant a Charter or Warrant in 1784 to certain black men, or men not so black, or men who, in all probability, were not born free, but slaves — for in this fact lies the only pith or marrow of the question — in the city of Boston, Massachusetts, to organize a Masonic Lodge. This act, Brother Wroth says, was a violation of the jurisdictional rights of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, inasmuch as that Grand Lodge was organized in 1733. Here it is that, we believe, our Brother Wroth makes a slight mistake. The Grand Lodge of Massachusetts was not organized in 1733, nor was it organized in 1776, nor is it certain that it was organized in 1784. This is, no doubt, a bold assertion to make; but we believe we can prove it to be entirely correct.

In July, 1733, a *Provincial Grand Lodge* was nominally organized, at the call of Henry Price, who, under the commission of Viscount Montagu, then Grand Master of the only Grand Lodge at that time existing in England, had been appointed Provincial Grand Master for Massachusetts and adjoining provinces. Unless Henry Price exceeded his authority, this Provincial Grand Lodge could have been nothing more than a mass meeting of Freemasons, to whom he proclaimed his appointment as their Provincial Grand Master, and from among whom he selected three assistants — a Deputy and two Wardens — to help him administer the duties of his office. If he exceeded his authority, and really did organize a body having the powers of a Grand Lodge, it could only have

* For the information of our friend we would state that the grant was made by the Grand Lodge of *Modern Masons*.

been a temporary organization, and to have no jurisdiction, as is understood jurisdiction of a Grand Lodge to-day.*

Be this as it may, no organization having the powers of a Grand Lodge existed in Massachusetts, as a permanent creation, until

* In the second edition of "Webb's Monitor," at p. 288, occurs this passage: "Upon the application of a number of brethren residing in Boston, a Warrant was granted by Lord Viscount Montagu, Grand Master of Masons in England, dated the 30th of April, 1733, appointing the R.W. Henry Price Grand Master in North America, with full power to appoint his deputy and other masonic officers necessary for forming a Grand Lodge, and also to constitute Lodges of Free and Accepted Masons as often as occasion should require. In consequence of this commission, the Grand Master opened a Grand Lodge at Boston, on the 30th of July, 1733, in due form, and appointed Andrew Belcher, D.G.M., and Thomas Kenelly and John Quam, Grand Wardens. *The Grand Lodge being thus organized*, under the designation of St. John's Grand Lodge, proceeded to grant Warrants for instituting regular Lodges in various parts of America," &c.

Now how much of this statement is fact, and how much is the late lamented Brother Webb's fancy, it is not difficult to determine. As New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania claim, and quite correctly, the appointment, by the Duke of Norfolk, in 1730, of Daniel Cox as Provincial Grand Master for those then provinces, and, as a copy of the warrant under which such claim is made will be found on another page, the reader thereof will perceive that it is entirely probable the commission given to Henry Price three years afterward must have been an exactly similar document; and, if so, that Henry Price was no more "Grand Master in North America" than was Daniel Cox. Lord Lovel intervened as Grand Master, in 1731, between the Duke of Norfolk and Viscount Montagu, and it is not at all probable that the latter should have ignored the appointment, by his almost immediate predecessor, of Daniel Cox. And, further, will the reader perceive, by the wording of that document, that neither Price nor Cox, nor any other Provincial Grand Master, had any express right to organize a Grand or Provincial Grand Lodge whatever, their powers being confined to appointing three additional officers or aids, with corresponding masonic titles, to assist them for two years in the duties of their office; and, thereafter, the brethren in these provinces named were, every other year—that is, every second year—to *elect* from among themselves a Provincial Grand Master, who should have the like power of appointing his Deputy and Wardens, as did the appointee of the Grand Master of England, but subject to the control and supervision of such appointee, as it was him, and not them, who was required to be in communication with, and report yearly to, the Grand Master or his Deputy in England.

If Henry Price organized a Grand Lodge in Boston, on the 30th July, 1733, in manner described by Webb, he did so, evidently, by authority of

after the Revolutionary War — began by the Declaration of Independence, on the 4th of July, 1776, and virtually ended by the surrender of the British army by Cornwallis at Yorktown, on the 19th of October, 1781. Two years afterward a treaty of peace was ratified by Great Britain and the United States, and on the 30th of April, 1789, our first President, Brother George Washington, of ever-glorious memory, was publicly inaugurated.

Not having immediate access to the archives of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, we do not know the exact year in which the Provincial Grand Lodge, if such a body existed, threw off its provincial condition and its existence alike, and the present Grand Lodge of Massachusetts was organized, but we may reasonably believe that it was not until after the political condition of the country became settled by the election of a President, and the organization of a permanent form of government. This, therefore, and at the earliest, could not have been until the year 1789 — two years after the Charter granted to those black men, Prince Hall, &c., had arrived in Boston, and under which they organized their African Lodge, No. 459.

Now it will be seen, if these premises be correct, that the petitioners of 1784, Prince Hall, &c., had just as much authority to organize their African Lodge, No. 459, in 1787, as had any other petitioners for a Warrant under which to organize a Lodge within the State of Massachusetts up to that date. Well, what is to be done about it? No exceptions are taken by any one. For nearly seven years thirteen United States have been fighting a for-

just such a document as had been delivered on the 5th of June, 1730, to Daniel Cox; and such organization was no more a legitimately organized masonic power for North America, nor even for Massachusetts, than would be a Grand Lodge organized somewhere in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, or New York, in 1730, by Daniel Cox; and the organization of which, even for those Provinces, there is no evidence to prove ever took place. It is evident to us that Webb has confounded the appointment of Henry Price, or rather, the arrival of his commission, his proclamation on the 30th July, 1733, of himself as Provincial Grand Master in a masonic assembly at Boston convened for that purpose, and his appointment therein of his three assistants, with the organization of a Grand Lodge for North America; and hence, since 1815, has been perpetuated an error that, as it gratified the pride of some brethren, and did not hurt any one, has never before been corrected.

midable naval and military power for liberty to live and govern themselves, and black men, as well as white men, are weary of strife. The Warrant by authority of which African Lodge, No. 459, worked, Brother Wroth informs us was "an ordinary Charter, in the usual form, and conferred no other privileges than those usually granted by such instruments." Very well. The war ended; peace proclaimed; a permanent government established; the Provincial Grand Lodge of Massachusetts throws off her condition of inferiority and her existence alike, and, in her stead, is erected the "Sovereign" Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. What, then, is the status of this African Lodge, No. 459? The discussions in Congress between 1783 and 1789 have decided *that*. True to her patrician ideas of that date, Massachusetts disowns this black integral of Masonry, and Messrs. Prince Hall, Boston Smith, Thomas Sanderson, &c., or whoever have, at this time, succeeded them in the government of this Lodge, disown Massachusetts, and believe they have just as good a right to constitute African Lodge, No. 459, English register, into a Grand Lodge of black men, as the powers that be masonic in Massachusetts have to convert the other Lodges in that State into a Grand Lodge of white men. It was a very natural idea, in the absence of knowledge of the fact, that not less than *three* operative Lodges, chartered by "ordinary Charters," can constitute a Grand Lodge.

But Brother Wroth further states that this Lodge was stricken from the registry of the Grand Lodge of England in 1813. Now this is no doubt so, as Brother Wroth says so, and we do not presume to deny it; but we can say that *the* Grand Lodge of England must have moved with unusual alacrity in such striking, as that Grand Lodge had no existence itself prior to the 27th of December of that year; and the chances are very much in favor of there not having been any striking of the kind done by that body in 1813, whatever it might have done before or afterward. Now, if this striking was not done in 1813, when was it done? Perhaps the archives of the present Grand Lodge of England might inform us; but we doubt it; and, if they did, in what manner would it advantage us? Suppose every Lodge in Massachusetts, in any year after 1783, had been stricken from English register, as, in all probability, they were, in manner exactly as was Afri-

can Lodge, No. 459, who is injured thereby? African Lodge only. The other Massachusetts Lodges stricken from English register, as also those everywhere within the bounds of the United States, could form, or had already formed, Grand Lodges in their respective States; but poor, solitary Africanus — that bird, “*corvo quoque rarius albo*,” of Horace; that “*rara avis in terris, nigroque simillima cygno*” of Juvenal — had to be Lodge No. 459, English register, or nothing. No American Grand Lodge could recognize her; consequently, and, as we have seen, she made the great mistake of recognizing herself, and, in her ignorance of masonic jurisprudence — not a very astonishing condition in those days — she preferred erecting herself into a Grand Lodge to total dissolution.

But Brother Wroth says this Lodge surrendered its Charter, and that Charter “*was never returned to it.*” Very true is this statement; but to what masonic power was that Charter surrendered, and for what purpose? Was it not to the “Sovereign” Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, and for the purpose of obtaining a Charter from that body in style exactly as did the other Lodges of Massachusetts at and subsequent to the organization of that Grand Body? We believe so. In good faith was that Charter surrendered,* *but it was not returned.* We italicize this clause,

* We regret much that our friend fell into the error of even supposing that our Charter was ever “*surrendered*” to the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, for any purpose whatever. This *never* was the case as the Warrant could have been sent to that Body only, by the hand of a representative from our own Lodge. Had one at any time been so deputed and sent, a record would have been preserved in our Lodge, which is not the case. We have living witnesses (brethren) among us whose initiations date year by year from 1815 to this day, and who sat with some of the original founders of our Lodge. Had any such action taken place they would have known the fact; but neither from them nor our records do we learn that such transaction ever occurred. We might further say that the records of our Lodge show that there has not always been unity among ourselves, for we were divided into parties, one of which went so far as to declare the work of several years “irregular and worthless,” asserting at the same time that the then acting officers were incompetent to perform the duties of their respective offices, the result of which led the public to believe that the Lodge was actually not at work; therefore, should either party have made such an application and been rejected the other would have exposed the fact. And further, history shows

as does Brother Wroth. Very proper is such emphasis. The "Sovereign" Grand Lodge of Massachusetts did not consider itself under any obligations to keep faith with black men, and consequently made African Lodge, No. 459, English register, realize the abject inferiority of its condition by informing its representatives that, as Freemasons were and could not be other than *free born* men, it could not be continued in existence as a Lodge in Republican Massachusetts. It is to be regretted that Brother Wroth was not informed of this fact; but we can only take this the earliest opportunity of supplying it, for his concise sketch of the origin and early history of Negro Masonic Lodges in America. Being thus rebuffed by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, what did the officers of African Lodge, No. 459, English register, do? In the belief that some such trick as this might be played upon them by the authorities Masonic of Massachusetts, they had made and kept a fair copy of their charter, and, as Brother Wroth states, after "studying over" the matter several years, and failing to get the said authorities, or their successors, to recognize them, they allowed they could work by the copy as well as the original, and they did.

that from the beginning of our existence as a Lodge, that Massachusetts never, as a Grand Lodge, allowed us, as Masons, to believe her friendly, so that there has been no opportunity offered for her to deceive us in a matter of such vital importance. The fact is undeniable, — *our original Charter is still in our possession.*

We find also the old and oft repeated statement in the above document that our Lodge was "stricken from the registry of the Grand Lodge of England in 1813," and of the "surrendering" of our Charter which was never returned to it, and that "a copy was kept," &c., &c. We ask, in view of Article 15, of the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of England, is this statement true; and if true, was it done with the intention of suspending or expelling our Lodge? and if so would they have acted in conformity with the following article in their Constitution, — as we were never summoned before that Body: — Article 15, "No Lodge shall be erased, nor any brother expelled, until the Master or Officers of the Lodge, or the offending brother, shall have been summoned to show cause, in the Grand Lodge, why such sentence should not be recorded and enforced."

If in the re-organization of the present Grand Lodge of England we, in common with the other Grand Lodges of this country, were all dropped from the Roll of the new Grand Lodge then formed, was it not a recognition of our right to establish a Grand Lodge in common with the other Masons of our country?

This, we believe, is the sum of the matter and of their offending; and, whatever may be the opinion of Brother Wroth, or the general decision of Freemasons in America, the writer of this article has no doubt as to which party comes out of the investigation with the whitest shirt, if the blackest skin.

Now, as to this question of Negro Masonic Lodges in the United States, we believe two or three things, which we will just write here, and then quit the subject:

First, we believe that the virus of slavery extant, and to continue extant in America for many years yet to come, will deny to the black man, as well as to the man not so black — in fine, and without going into a hair-splitting disquisition as to the various degrees of color into which Americans of African origin and descent are in this country divided, *to the man not born free* — all rights and privileges of Freemasons, were such Americans of African origin and descent proved to have been made in the most regularly organized Lodge that ever was tyled by a brother at the outer door with a drawn sword in his hand.

Secondly, We believe that when this virus becomes totally extinct, the prejudice against color will have no more place in America than it has in England, or France, or Spain, or Portugal, or Morocco, or Turkey, or on the coast of Africa itself. And,

Thirdly, We believe that in that day there will be Charters granted by every one of our American Grand Lodges, for the purpose of organizing, in their respective jurisdictions, Lodges of black men, yellow men, maroons, quadroons, octoroons, duodeciroons, sedecimaroons, duo-et-trigentirooms, and sexaquaturooms, as freely as such are now granted to organize Lodges of white men — yea, even the purest Caucasian stock that ever lived on the broad earth.

In the meantime, the least there may be said by masonic editors, masonic orators, and masonic foreign correspondence committees, either for or against Negro Freemasons and Negro Masonic Lodges, the better it will be for Freemasonry in America, and the less occasion such editors, orators, and committees will have to glorify or stultify themselves should they be among the living when that day comes.

Since the foregoing pages were put in type we have very fortunately seen for the first time a masonic history written in a spirit of friendliness to our race,* from which we make the following extracts in confirmation of the testimony (printed on pp. 19, 20, of "Caste among Masons,") of Dr. Belknap and his correspondents, relative to the history of the African Lodge.

"An article in No. 4. Vol. 14, of the "Masonic Journal," mentions that, in 1775, the African Lodge was formed of English troops, and draws a very favorable picture both of it and its president." Speaking of the "Lodges of colored people which worked separately," Br. Findel says, "it was long doubted whether these were legally constituted, until Br. Dr. R. Barthelmess, of Brooklyn, demonstrated from the history of their first beginning, that such was the case, so that their recognition can no longer, with any show of reason, be withheld." After a further discussion of the subject he concludes thus, "all the doubts which were started on several sides, and even entertained by the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, Br. Charles W. Moore, touching the genuineness of this charter, all the subterfuges to which the foreign correspondence committee in the Grand Lodge of New York, had recourse to prove that the assertions of the African Lodge were incorrect, all fall to the ground before this correspondence of Br. Prince Hall which I now hold in my hands, written at the time, upon this very subject."

* History of Freemasonry, by J. G. Findel, translated from the German Edition. Asher & Co., 13 Bedford Street, London, 1866.

ERRATA.

Page 17. — 3d line read *Forten*, instead of Porten.

Page 34. — 6th line read *Boston*, instead of New England.

Page 44. — 3d paragraph, 1st line read *as*, instead of as as.

Page 64. — 6th line read *1858*, instead of 1868.

Page 69. — 17th line read "*even so unto them*," instead
of even so them.

Page 74. — 5th line read *fiends*, instead of friends.

